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Poetical Works

OF

LORD BYRON.

First Edition . . *June*, 1901.
Second Edition . . *January*, 1905.

Lord Byron

from an engraving after a drawing by G. H. Harlow.

Walker & Cockerell, ph. sc.

The Works

OF

LORD BYRON.

A NEW, REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION,
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Poetry. Vol. IV.

EDITED BY

ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE, M.A.,
HON. F.R.S.L.

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH VOLUME.

THE poems included in this volume consist of thirteen longer or more important works, written at various periods between June, 1816, and October, 1821; of eight occasional pieces (*Poems of July—September*, 1816), written in 1816; and of another collection of occasional pieces (*Poems* 1816–1823), written at intervals between November, 1816, and September, 1823. Of this second group of minor poems five are now printed and published for the first time.

The volume is not co-extensive with the work of the period. The third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold* (1816–1817), the first five cantos of *Don Juan* (1818, 1819, 1820), *Sardanapalus*, *The Two Foscari*, *Cain*, and *Heaven and Earth* (1821), form parts of other volumes, but, in spite of these notable exceptions, the fourth volume contains the work of the poet's maturity, which is and must ever remain famous. Byron was not content to write on one kind of subject, or to confine

himself to one branch or species of poetry. He tracked the footsteps now of this master poet, now of another, far outstripping some of his models; soon spent in the pursuit of others. Even in his own lifetime, and in the heyday of his fame, his friendliest critics, who applauded him to the echo, perceived that the "manifold motions" of his versatile and unsleeping talent were not always sanctioned or blessed by his genius. Hence the unevenness of his work, the different values of this or that poem. But, even so, in width of compass, in variety of style, and in measure of success, his achievement was unparalleled. Take such poems as *Manfred* or *Mazeppa*, which have left their mark on the literature of Europe; as *Beppo*, the *avant courrier* of *Don Juan*, or the "inimitable" *Vision of Judgment*, which the "hungry generations" have not trodden down or despoiled of its freshness. Not one of these poems suggests or resembles the other, but each has its crowd of associations, a history and almost a literature of its own.

The whole of this volume was written on foreign soil, in Switzerland or Italy, and, putting aside *The Dream*, *The Monody on the Death of Sheridan*, *The Irish Avatar*, and *The Blues*, the places, the persons and events, the *matériel* of the volume as a whole, to say nothing of the style and metre of the poems, are derived from the history and the literature of Switzerland and Southern Europe. An unwilling, at times a vindictive exile, he did more than any other poet or writer of his age to

familiarize his own countrymen with the scenery, the art and letters of the Continent, and, conversely, to make the existence of English literature, or, at least, the writings of one Englishman, known to Frenchmen and Italians; to the Teuton and the Slav. If he "taught us little" as prophet or moralist; as a guide to knowledge; as an educator of the general reader—"your British blackguard," as he was pleased to call him—his teaching and influence were "in widest commonalty spread."

Questions with regard to his personality, his morals, his theological opinions, his qualifications as an artist, his grammar, his technique, and so forth, have, perhaps inevitably, absorbed the attention of friend and foe, and the one point on which all might agree has been overlooked, namely, the fact that he taught us a great deal which it is desirable and agreeable to know—which has passed into common knowledge through the medium of his poetry. It is true that he wrote his plays and poems at lightning speed, and that if he was at pains to correct some obvious blunders, he expended but little labour on picking his phrases or polishing his lines; but it is also true that he read widely and studied diligently, in order to prepare himself for an outpouring of verse, and that so far from being a superficial observer or inaccurate recorder, his authority is worth quoting on questions of fact and points of detail.

The appreciation of poetry is a matter of taste, and still more of temperament. Readers cannot be coerced

into admiration, or scolded into disapproval and contempt. But if they are willing or can be persuaded to read with some particularity and attention the writings of the illustrious dead, not entirely as partisans, or with the view to dethroning other "Monarchs of Parnassus," they will divine the secret of their fame, and will understand, perhaps recover, the "first rapture" of contemporaries.

Byron sneered and carped at Southey as a "scribbler of all works." He was himself a reader of all works, and without some measure of book-learning and not a little research the force and significance of his various numbers are weakened or obliterated.

It is with the hope of supplying this modicum of book-learning that the Introductions and notes in this and other volumes have been compiled.

I desire to acknowledge, with thanks, the courteous response of Mons. J. Capré, Commandant of the Castle of Chillon, to a letter of inquiry with regard to the "Souterrains de Chillon."

I have to express my gratitude to Sir Henry Irving, to Mr. Joseph Knight, and to Mr. F. E. Taylor, for valuable information concerning the stage representation of *Manfred* and *Marino Faliero*.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Richard Garnett, C.B., and to my friend, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, for assistance in many important particulars during the construction of the volume.

I must also record my thanks to Mr. Oscar Browning, Mr. Josceline Courtenay, and other correspondents, for information and assistance in points of difficulty.

I have consulted and derived valuable information from the following works: *The Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., by the late Professor Kölbing; *Mazeppa*, by Dr. Englaender; *Marino Faliero avanti il Dogado* and *La Congiura* (published in the *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*), by Signor Vittorio Lazzarino; and *Selections from the Poetry of Lord Byron*, by Dr. F. I. Carpenter of Chicago, U.S.A.

I take the opportunity of expressing my acknowledgments to Miss K. Schlesinger, Miss De Alberti, and to Signor F. Bianco, for their able and zealous services in the preparation of portions of the volume.

On behalf of the publisher I beg to acknowledge the kindness of Captain the Hon. F. L. King Noel, in sanctioning the examination and collation of the MS. of *Beppo*, now in his possession; and of Mrs. Horace Pym of Foxwold Chace, for permitting the portrait of Sheridan by Sir Joshua Reynolds to be reproduced for this volume.

ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

May 5, 1901.

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THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.*

THE *Prisoner of Chillon*, says Moore (*Life*, p. 320), was written at Ouchy, near Lausanne, where Byron and Shelley "were detained two days in a small inn [Hôtel de l'Ancre, now d'Angleterre] by the weather." Byron's letter to Murray, dated June 27 (but ? 28), 1816, does not precisely tally with Shelley's journal contained in a letter to Peacock, July 12, 1816 (*Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*, 1880, ii. 171, *sq.*); but, if Shelley's first date, June 23, is correct, it follows that the two poets visited the Castle of Chillon on Wednesday, June 26, reached Ouchy on Thursday, June 27, and began their homeward voyage on Saturday, June 29 (Shelley misdates it June 30). On this reckoning the *Prisoner of Chillon* was begun and finished between Thursday, June 27, and Saturday, June 29, 1816. Whenever or wherever begun, it was completed by July 10 (see *Memoir of John Murray*, 1891, i. 364), and was ready for transmission to England by July 25. The MS., in Claire's handwriting, was placed in Murray's hands on October 11, and the poem, with seven others, was published December 5, 1816.

In a final note to the *Prisoner of Chillon* (First Edition, 1816, p. 59), Byron confesses that when "the foregoing poem was composed he knew too little of the history of Bonnivard to do justice to his courage and virtues," and appends as a note to the "Sonnet on Chillon," "some account of his life . . . furnished by the kindness of a citizen of that Republic," *i.e.* Geneva. The note, which is now entitled "Advertisement," is taken bodily from the pages of a work published in 1786 by the Swiss naturalist, Jean Senebier, who died in 1809. It was not Byron's way to invent imaginary authorities, but rather to give his references with some pride and particularity, and it is possible that this unacknowledged and hitherto unverified "account" was supplied by some literary acquaintance, who failed to explain that his

information was common property. Be that as it may, Senebier's prose is in some respects as unhistorical as Byron's verse, and stands in need of some corrections and additions.

François Bonivard (there is no contemporary authority for "Bonnivard") was born in 1493. In early youth (1510) he became by inheritance Prior of St. Victor, a monastery outside the walls of Geneva, and on reaching manhood (1514) he accepted the office and the benefice, "la dignité ecclésiastique de Prieur et de la Seigneurie temporelle de St. Victor." A lover of independence, a child of the later Renaissance, in a word, a Genevese, he threw in his lot with a band of ardent reformers and patriots, who were conspiring to shake off the yoke of Duke Charles III. of Savoy, and convert the city into a republic. Here is his own testimony: "Dès que j'eus commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, je me sentis entrainé par un goût prononcé pour les Républiques dont j'épousai toujours les intérêts." Hence, in a great measure, the unrelenting enmity of the duke, who not only ousted him from his priory, but caused him to be shut up for two years at Grolée, Gex, and Belley, and again, after he had been liberated on a second occasion, ordered him, a safe conduct notwithstanding, to be seized and confined in the Castle of Chillon. Here he remained from 1530 to February 1, 1536, when he was released by the Bernese.

For the first two years he was lodged in a room near the governor's quarters, and was fairly comfortable; but a day came when the duke paid a visit to Chillon; and "then," he writes, "the captain thrust me into a cell lower than the lake, where I lived four years. I know not whether he did it by the duke's orders or of his own accord; but sure it is that I had so much leisure for walking, that I wore in the rock which was the pavement a track or little path, as it had been made with a hammer" (*Chroniques des Ligues* de Stumpf, addition de Bonivard).

After he had been liberated, "par la grace de Dieu donnee a Messrs de Berne," he returned to Geneva, and was made a member of the Council of the State, and awarded a house and a pension of two hundred crowns a year. A long life was before him, which he proceeded to spend in characteristic fashion, finely and honourably as scholar, author, and reformer, but with little self-regard or self-respect as a private citizen. He was married no less than four times, and not one of these alliances was altogether satisfactory or creditable. Determined "to warm both hands before the fire of life," he was prone to ignore the prejudices and even the decencies of his fellow-citizens, now incurring their

displeasure, and now again, as one who had greatly testified for truth and freedom, being taken back into favour and forgiven. There was a deal of human nature in Bonivard, with the result that, at times, conduct fell short of pretension and principle. Estimates of his character differ widely. From the standpoint of Catholic orthodoxy, "C'était un fort mauvais sujet et un plus mauvais prêtre;" and even his captivity, infamous as it was, "ne peut rendre Bonivard intéressant" (*Notices Généalogiques sur les Familles Genevoises*, par J. A. Galiffe, 1836, iii. 67, *sq.*); whilst an advocate and champion, the author of the *Preface* to *Les Chroniques de Genève* par François de Bonnivard, 1831, tom. i. pt. i. p. xli., avows that "aucun homme n'a fait preuve d'un plus beau caractère, d'un plus parfait désintéressement que l'illustre Prieur de St Victor." Like other great men, he may have been guilty of "quelques égarements du cœur, quelques concessions passagères aux délices des sens," but "Peu importe à la postérité les irrégularités de leur vie privée" (p. xlviii.).

But whatever may be the final verdict with regard to the morals, there can be no question as to the intellectual powers of the "Prisoner of Chillon." The publication of various MS. tracts, *e.g. Advis et Devis de l'ancienne et nouvelle Police de Genève*, 1865; *Advis et Devis des Lengnes*, etc., 1865, which were edited by the late J. J. Chaponnière, and, after his death, by M. Gustave Revilliod, has placed his reputation as historian, satirist, philosopher, beyond doubt or cavil. One quotation must suffice. He is contrasting the Protestants with the Catholics (*Advis et Devis de la Source de Lidolatrie*, Geneva, 1856, p. 159): "Et nous disons que les prebstres rongent les mortz et est vray; mais nous faisons bien pys, car nous rongeons les vifz. Quel profit revient aux paveures du dommage des prebstres? Nous nous ventons touttes les deux parties de prescher Christ cruciffie et disons vray, car nous le laissons cruciffie et nud en l'arbre de la croix, et jouons a beaux dez au pied dicelle croix, pour scavoir qui haura sa robe."

For Bonivard's account of his second imprisonment, see *Les Chroniques de Genève*, tom. ii. part ii. pp. 571–577; see, too, *Notice sur François Bonivard*, . . . par Le Docteur J. J. Chaponnière, Mémoires et Documents Publiés, par La Société d'Histoire, etc., de Genève, 1845, iv. 137–245; *Chillon Etude Historique*, par L. Vulliemin, Lausanne, 1851; *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Seconde Période, vol. 82, Août, 1869, pp. 682–709; "True Story of the Prisoner of Chillon," *Nineteenth Century*, May, 1900, No. 279, pp. 821–829, by A. van Amstel (Johannes Christiaan Neuman).

The Prisoner of Chillon was reviewed (together with the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*) by Sir Walter Scott (*Quarterly Review*, No. xxxi., October, 1816), and by Jeffrey (*Edinburgh Review*, No. liv., December, 1816).

With the exception of the *Eclectic* (March, 1817, N.S., vol. vii. pp. 298–304), the lesser reviews were unfavourable. For instance, the *Critical Review* (December, 1816, Series V. vol. iv. pp. 567–581) detected the direct but unacknowledged influence of Wordsworth on thought and style ; and the *Portfolio* (No. vi. pp. 121–128), in an elaborate skit, entitled "Literary Frauds," assumed, and affected to prove, that the entire poem was a forgery, and belonged to the same category as *The Right Honourable Lord Byron's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, etc.*

For extracts from these and other reviews, see Kölbing, *Prisoner of Chillon, and Other Poems*, Weimar, 1896, excursus i. pp. 3–55.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind![1]
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art:
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.[2]

1. [In the first draft, the sonnet opens thus—

"Belovéd Goddess of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
Thy palace is within the Freeman's heart,
Whose soul the love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Thy joy is with them still, and unconfined,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom."
Ed. 1832.]

2. [Compare—

"I appeal from her [sc. Florence] to Thee."
Proph. of Dante, Canto I. line 125.]

ADVERTISEMENT

When this poem[1] was composed, I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. With some account of his life I have been furnished, by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom :—

" François De Bonnivard, fils de Louis De Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496. Il fit ses études à Turin : en 1510 Jean Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le Prieuré de St. Victor, qui aboutissoit aux murs de Genève, et qui formait un bénéfice considérable. . . .

" Ce grand homme—(Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l'étendue de ses connaissances, et la vivacité de son esprit),—ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Genevois qui aiment Genève. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis : pour assurer la liberté de notre République, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne ; il oublia son repos ; il méprisa ses richesses ; il ne négligea rien pour affermir

1. *When the foregoing. . . . Some account of his life will be found in a note appended to the Sonnet on Chillon, with which I have been furnished, etc.*—[*Notes, The Prisoner of Chillon, etc.*, 1816, p. 59.]

le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix : dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses citoyens ; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe et la chaleur d'un patriote.

" Il dit dans le commencement de son Histoire de Genève, que, *dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les Républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts :* c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie. . . .

" Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonca hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le Duc de Savoye et l'Evêque. . . .

" En 1519, Bonnivard devient le martyr de sa patrie : Le Duc de Savoye étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cent hommes, Bonnivard craint le ressentiment du Duc ; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites ; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnaient, et conduit par ordre du Prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard était malheureux dans ses voyages : comme ses malheurs n'avaient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il était toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçaient, et par conséquent il devait être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, et qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoye : ce Prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusques en 1536 ; il fut alors delivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du Pays-de-Vaud.

" Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de trouver Genève libre et réformée : la République s'empressa de lui témoigner sa reconnaissance, et de le dédommager des maux qu'il avoit soufferts ; elle le reçut Bourgeois de la ville au mois de Juin, 1536 ; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le Vicaire-Général, et elle lui assigna une pension de deux cent écus d'or tant qu'il séjournerait à Genève. Il fut admis dans le Conseil des Deux-Cent en 1537.

" Bonnivard n'a pas fini d'être utile : après avoir

travaillé à rendre Genève libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le Conseil à accorder [aux ecclésiastiques et aux paysans] un tems suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisait; il réussit par sa douceur: on prêche toujours le Christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité. . . .

"Bonnivard fut savant: ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avait bien lu les auteurs classiques Latins, et qu'il avait approfondi la théologie et l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimait les sciences, et il croyait qu'elles pouvaient faire la gloire de Genève; aussi il ne négligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante; en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique; et ces livres sont en partie les rares et belles éditions du quinzième siècle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même année, ce bon patriote institua la République son héritière, à condition qu'elle employerait ses biens à entretenir le collège dont on projettait la fondation.

"Il parait que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parcequ'il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de Juillet, 1570, jusques en 1571."—[*Histoire Littéraire de Genève*, par Jean Senebier (1741–1809), 1786, i. 131–137.]

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

I.

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,[1]
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,[1.]
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are banned,[2] and barred—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;

i. *But with the inward waste of grief.*—[*MS.*]

1. Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis the Sixteenth, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect; to such, and not to fear, this change in *hers* was to be attributed.

[It has been said that the Queen's hair turned grey during the return from Varennes to Paris; but Carlyle (*French Revolution*, 1839, i. 182) notes that as early as May 4, 1789, on the occasion of the assembly of the States-General, "Her hair is already grey with many cares and crosses."

Compare "Thy father's beard is turned white with the news" (Shakespeare, 1 *Henry IV.*, act ii. sc. 4, line 345); and—

"For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair."
Marmion, Canto I. stanza xxviii. lines 19, 20.]

2. [The *N. Engl. Dict.*, art. "Ban," gives this passage as the earliest instance of the use of the verb "to ban" in the sense of "to interdict, to prohibit." Exception was taken to this use of the word in the *Crit. Rev.*, 1817, Series V. vol. iv. p. 571.]

That father perished at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling place;
We were seven—who now are one,[1]
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finished as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;[1.]
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have sealed,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;—
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,[2]
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,

1. *Braving rancour—chains—and rage.*—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare the epitaph on the monument of Richard Lord Byron, in the chancel of Hucknall-Torkard Church, "Beneath in a vault is interred the body of Richard Lord Byron, who with the rest of his family, being seven brothers," etc. (Elze's *Life of Lord Byron*, p. 4, *note* 1).

Compare, too, Churchill's *Prophecy of Famine*, lines 391, 392—

"Five brothers there I lost, in manhood's pride,
Two in the field and three on gibbets died."

The Bonivard of history had but two brothers, Amblard and another.]

2. ["This is really so: the loop-holes that are partly stopped up are now but long crevices or clefts, but Bonivard, from the spot where he was chained, could, perhaps, never get an idea of the loveliness and variety of radiating light which the sunbeam shed at different hours of the day. . . . In the morning this light is of luminous and transparent shining, which the curves of the vaults send back all along the hall. Victor Hugo (*Le Rhin*, . . . Hachette, 1876, I. iii. pp. 123–131) describes this . . . 'Le phénomène de la grotto d'azur s'accomplit dans le souterrain de Chillon, et le lac de Genève n'y réussit pas moins bien que la Méditerranée.' During the afternoon the hall assumes a much deeper and warmer colouring, and the blue transparency of the morning disappears; but at eventide, after the sun has set behind the Jura, the scene changes to the deep glow of fire. . . ."—*Guide to the Castle of Chillon*, by A. Naef, architect, 1896, pp, 35, 36.]

The Prison of Bonnivard

from a photograph.

And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp: [1]
And in each pillar there is a ring,[2]
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother drooped and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chained us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;

1. [Compare—

"One little marshy spark of flame."
Def. Transf., Part I. sc. 1.

Kölbing notes six other allusions in Byron's works to the "will-o'-the-wisp," but omits the line in the "Incantation" (*Manfred*, act i. sc. 1, line 195)—

"And the wisp on the morass,"

which the Italian translator would have rendered "bundle of straw" (see Letter to Hoppner, February 28, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 204, *note* 2, *et post* p. 92, *note* 1).]

2. [This ". . . is not exactly so; the third column does not seem to have ever had a ring, but the traces of these rings are very visible in the two first columns from the entrance, although the rings have been removed; and on the three last we find the rings still riveted on the darkest side of the pillars where they face the rock, so that the unfortunate prisoners chained there were even bereft of light. . . . The fifth column is said to be the one to which Bonivard was chained during four years. Byron's name is carved on the southern side of the third column . . . on the seventh tympanum, at about 1 metre 45 from the lower edge of the shaft." Much has been written for and against the authenticity of this inscription, which, according to M. Naef, the author of *Guide*, was carved by Byron himself, "with an antique ivory-mounted stiletto, which had been discovered in the duke's room."—*Guide, etc.*, pp. 39–42. The inscription was *in situ* as early as August 22, 1820, as Mr. Richard Edgcumbe points out (*Notes and Queries*, Series V. xi. 487).]

We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fettered in hand, but joined in heart,
'Twas still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound, not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distressed
To see such bird in such a nest;[1]

1. —— *pined in heart.*—[Editions 1816–1837.]

1. [Compare, for similarity of sound—

"Thou tree of covert and of rest
For this young Bird that is distrest."

Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, by W. Wordsworth, *Works*, 1889, p. 364.

Compare, too—

"She came into the cave, but it was merely
To see her bird reposing in his nest."

Don Juan, Canto II. stanza clxviii. lines 3, 4.]

For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see[1]
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorred to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perished in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent

1. [Compare—
"Those polar summers, *all* sun, and some ice."
Don Juan, Canto XII. stanza lxxii. line 8.]

From Chillon's snow-white battlement,[1]
Which round about the wave inthralls :
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake [2]

1. [Ruskin (*Modern Painters*, Part IV. chap. i. sect. 9, "Touching the Grand Style," 1888, iii. 8. 9) criticizes these five lines 107–111, and points out that, alike in respect of accuracy and inaccuracy of detail, they fulfil the conditions of poetry in contradistinction to history. "Instead," he concludes, "of finding, as we expected, the poetry distinguished from the history by the omission of details, we find it consisting entirely in the *addition* of details ; and instead of it being characterized by regard only of the invariable, we find its whole power to consist in the clear expression of what is singular and particular !"]

2. The Château de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Meillerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo. Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent : below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet, French measure : within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall ; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered : in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces. He was confined here several years. It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Héloïse, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water ; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death. The château is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

["Le château de Chillon . . . est situé dans le lac sur un rocher qui forme une presqu'isle, et autour du quel j'ai vu sonder à plus de cent cinquante brasses qui font près de huit cents pieds, sans trouver le fond. On a creusé dans ce rocher des caves et des cuisines au-dessous du niveau de l'eau, qu'on y introduit, quand on veut, par des robinets. C'est-là que fut détenu six ans prisonnier François Bonnivard . . . homme d'un mérite rare, d'une droiture et d'une fermeté à toute épreuve, ami de la liberté, quoique Savoyard, et tolérant quoique prêtre," etc. (*La Nouvelle Héloïse*, par J. J. Rousseau, partie vi. Lettre 8, *note* (1) ; *Œuvres complètes*, 1836, ii. 356, *note* 1).

With Byron's description of Chillon, compare that of Shelley, contained in a letter to Peacock, dated July 12, 1816 (*Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*, 1880, ii. 171, *sq.*). The belief or tradition that Bonivard's prison is "below the surface of the lake," for which Shelley as well as Rousseau is responsible, but which Byron only records in verse, may be traced to a statement attributed to Bonivard himself, who says (*Mémoires, etc.*, 1845, iv. 268) that the commandant thrust him "en unes croctes desquelles le fond estoit plus bas que le lac sur lequel Chillon estoit citue." As a matter of fact, "the level [of *les souterrains*] is now three metres higher than the level of the water, and even if we take off the difference arising from the fact that the level of the lake

The dark vault lies wherein we lay:
We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knocked;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rocked,
And I have felt it shake, unshocked,[1]
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moistened many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;[2]
But why delay the truth?—he died.[i]

i. *But why withhold the blow?—he died.*—[*MS.*]

was once much higher, and that the floor of the halls has been raised, still the halls must originally have been built about two metres above the surface of the lake."—*Guide, etc.*, pp. 28, 29.]

1. [The "real Bonivard" might have indulged in and, perhaps, prided himself on this feeble and irritating *paronomasy;* but nothing can be less in keeping with the bearing and behaviour of the tragic and sententious Bonivard of the legend.]

2. [Compare—

". . . I'm a forester and breather
Of the steep mountain-tops."

Werner, act iv. sc. 1.]

I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.[i]
He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scooped for him a shallow grave[1]
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begged them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,[2]
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laughed—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such Murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,[3]
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;

i. *To break or bite* ——.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare "With the aid of Suleiman's ataghan and my own sabre, we scooped a shallow grave upon the spot which Darvell had indicated" (*A Fragment of a Novel by Byron, Letters*, 1899, iii. Appendix IX. p. 452).]

2. [Compare—

"And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain."
Christabel, by S. T. Coleridge, part ii. lines 412, 413.]

3. [It is said that his parents handed him over to the care of his uncle, Jean-Aimé Bonivard, when he was still an infant, and it is denied that his father was "literally put to death."]

He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.[1]
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:[2]
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmixed with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright;

1. [Kölbing quotes parallel uses of the same expression in *Werner*, act iv. sc. 1; Churchill's *The Times*, line 341, etc.; but does not give the original—

"But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
Than that which, withering on the virgin-thorn," etc.
Midsummer Night's Dream, act i. sc. 1, lines 76, 77.]

2. [Compare—

"The first, last look of Death revealed."
The Giaour, line 89, *note* 2.

Byron was a connoisseur of the incidents and by-play of "sudden death," so much so that Goethe was under the impression that he had been guilty of a venial murder (see his review of *Manfred* in his paper *Kunst und Alterthum, Letters*, 1901, v. 506, 507). A year after these lines were written, when he was at Rome (Letter to Murray, May 30, 1817), he saw three robbers guillotined, and observed himself and them from a psychological standpoint.

"The ghastly bed of Sin" (lines 182, 183) may be a reminiscence of the death-bed of Lord Falkland (*English Bards*, etc., lines 680–686; *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 351, *note* 2).]

And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting Nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listened, but I could not hear;
I called, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonishéd;
I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rushed to him:—I found him not,
I only stirred in this black spot,
I only lived, *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last, the sole, the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,[1]
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

1. [Compare—

"And yet I could not die."
Ancient Mariner, Part IV. line 262.]

IX.

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,[1]
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
It was not night—it was not day;
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,

1. [Compare—
"I wept not; so all stone I felt within."
Dante's *Inferno*, xxxiii. 47 (Cary's translation).]

But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perched, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,[1]
And song that said a thousand things,
And seemed to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seemed like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,[2]
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in wingéd guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile—
I sometimes deemed that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;[3]
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown—
And left me twice so doubly lone,—
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,

1. [Compare "Song by Glycine"—

"A sunny shaft did I behold,
From sky to earth it slanted;
And poised therein a bird so bold—
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted," etc.
Zapolya, by S. T. Coleridge, act ii. sc. 1.]

2. [Compare—

"When Ruth was left half desolate,
Her Father took another Mate."
Ruth, by W. Wordsworth, *Works*, 1889, p. 121.]

3. ["The souls of the blessed are supposed by some of the Mahommedans to animate green birds in the groves of Paradise."—Note to Southey's *Thalaba*, bk. xi. stanza 5, line 13.]

Lone—as a solitary cloud,[1]
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear[2]
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfastened did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crushed heart felt blind and sick.

XII.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;

1. [Compare—
"I wandered lonely as a cloud."
Works of W. Wordsworth, 1889, p. 205.]

2. [Compare—
"Yet some did think that he had little business here."
Ibid., p. 183.
Compare, too, *The Dream*, line 166, *vide post*, p. 39—
"What business had they there at such a time?"]

And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:[1]
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barred windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.[2]

XIII.

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,[i]
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;[3]
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channelled rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-walled distant town,[4]
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,[5]

i. *I saw them with their lake below,*
And their three thousand years of snow.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

"He sighed, and turned his eyes, because he knew
'Twas but a larger jail he had in view."

Dryden, *Palamon and Arcite*, bk. i. lines 216, 217.

Compare, too—

"An exile——
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong."

Prophecy of Dante, iv. 131, 132.]

2. [Compare—

"The harvest of a quiet eye."

A Poet's Epitaph, line 51, *Works* of W. Wordsworth, 1889, p. 116.]

3. [This, according to Ruskin's canon, may be a poetical inaccuracy. The Rhone is blue below the lake at Geneva, but "les embouchures" at Villeneuve are muddy and discoloured.]

4. [Villeneuve.]

5. Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island [Ile de Paix]; the only one I could perceive in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seemed no more,[1]
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;[2]
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much oppress,
Had almost need of such a rest.

1. [Compare—

"Of Silver How, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
And one green island."

Works of W. Wordsworth, 1889, p. 220.]

2. [Compare the Ancient Mariner on the water-snakes—

"O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare."

Ancient Mariner, Part IV. lines 282, 283.

There is, too, in these lines (352–354), as in many others, an echo of Wordsworth. In the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle* it is told how the "two undying fish" of Bowscale Tarn, and the "eagle lord of land and sea" ministered to the shepherd-lord. It was no wonder that the critics of 1816 animadverted on Byron's "communion" with the Lakers. "He could not," writes a Critical Reviewer (Series V. vol. iv. pp. 567–581), "carry many volumes on his tour, but among the few, we will venture to predict, are found the two volumes of poems lately republished by Mr. Wordsworth. . . . Such is the effect of reading and enjoying the poetry of Mr. W., to whose system (ridiculed alike by those who could not, and who would not understand it) Lord Byron, it is evident, has become a tardy convert, and of whose merits in the poems on our table we have a silent but unequivocal acknowledgment."]

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days—
I kept no count, I took no note—
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why, and recked not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fettered or fetterless to be,
I learned to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own! [1]
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learned to dwell; [i]
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh.

i. Here follows in the MS.—

Nor slew I of my subjects one—
What sovereign { *hath so little* / *yet so much hath* } *done?*

1. [Compare the well-known lines in Lovelace's "To Althea—From Prison"—

"Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage."]

POEMS OF JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1816.

THE DREAM.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE DREAM.*

The Dream, which was written at Diodati in July, 1816 (probably towards the end of the month; see letters to Murray and Rogers, dated July 22 and July 29), is a retrospect and an apology. It consists of an opening stanza, or section, on the psychology of dreams, followed by some episodes or dissolving views, which purport to be the successive stages of a dream. Stanzas ii. and iii. are descriptive of Annesley Park and Hall, and detail two incidents of Byron's boyish passion for his neighbour and distant cousin, Mary Anne Chaworth. The first scene takes place on the top of "Diadem Hill," the "cape" or rounded spur of the long ridge of Howatt Hill, which lies about half a mile to the south-east of the hall. The time is the late summer or early autumn of 1803. The "Sun of Love" has not yet declined, and the "one beloved face" is still shining on him; but he is beginning to realize that "her sighs are not for him," that she is out of his reach. The second scene, which belongs to the following year, 1804, is laid in the "antique oratory" (not, as Moore explains, another name for the hall, but "a small room built over the porch, or principal entrance of the hall, and looking into the courtyard"), and depicts the final parting. His doom has been pronounced, and his first impulse is to pen some passionate reproach, but his heart fails him at the sight of the "Lady of his Love," serene and smiling, and he bids her farewell with smiles on his lips, but grief unutterable in his heart.

Stanza iv. recalls an incident of his Eastern travels—a halt at noonday by a fountain on the route from Smyrna to Ephesus (March 14, 1810), "the heads of camels were seen peeping above the tall reeds" (see *Travels in Albania*, 1858, ii. 59).

The next episode (stanza v.) depicts an imaginary scene, suggested, perhaps, by some rumour or more definite assurance, and often present to his "inward eye"—the "one beloved," the mother of a happy family, but herself a forsaken and unhappy wife.

He passes on (stanza vi.) to his marriage in 1815, his bride "gentle" and "fair," but *not* the "one beloved"—to the wedding day, when he stood before an altar, "like one forlorn," confused by the sudden vision of the past fulfilled with Love the "indestructible"!

In stanza vii. he records and analyzes the "sickness of the soul," the so-called "phrenzy" which had overtaken and changed the "Lady of his Love;" and, finally (stanza viii.), he lays bare the desolation of his heart, depicting himself as at enmity with mankind, but submissive to Nature, the "Spirit of the Universe," if, haply, there may be "reserved a blessing" even for him, the rejected and the outlaw.

Moore says (*Life*, p. 321) that *The Dream* cost its author "many a tear in writing"—being, indeed, the most mournful as well as picturesque "story of a wandering life" that ever came from the pen and heart of man." In his *Real Lord Byron* (i. 284) Mr. Cordy Jeaffreson maintains that *The Dream* "has no autobiographical value. . . . A dream it was, as false as dreams usually are." The character of the poet, as well as the poem itself, suggests another criticism. Byron suffered or enjoyed vivid dreams, and, as poets will, shaped his dreams, consciously and of set purpose, to the furtherance of his art, but nothing concerning himself interested him or awoke the slumbering chord which was not based on actual fact. If the meeting on the "cape crowned with a peculiar diadem," and the final interview in the "antique oratory" had never happened or happened otherwise; if he had not "quivered" during the wedding service at Seaham; if a vision of Annesley and Mary Chaworth had not flashed into his soul,—he would have taken no pleasure in devising these incidents and details, and weaving them into a fictitious narrative. He took himself too seriously to invent and dwell lovingly on the acts and sufferings of an imaginary Byron. *The Dream* is "picturesque" because the accidents of the scenes are dealt with not historically, but artistically, are omitted or supplied according to poetical licence; but the record is neither false, nor imaginary, nor unverifiable. On the other hand, the composition and publication of the poem must be set down, if not to malice and revenge, at least to the preoccupancy of chagrin and remorse, which compelled him to take the world into his confidence, cost what it might to his own self-respect, or the peace of mind and happiness of others.

For an elaborate description of Annesley Hall and Park, written with a view to illustrate *The Dream*, see "A Byronian Ramble," Part II., the *Athenæum*, August 30, 1834. See, too, an interesting quotation from Sir Richard Phillips' unfinished *Personal Tour through the United Kingdom*, published in the *Mirror*, 1828, vol. xii. p. 286; *Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey*, by Washington Irving, 1835, p. 191, *seq.*; *The House and Grave of Byron*, 1855; and an article in *Lippincott's Magazine*, 1876, vol. xviii. pp. 637, *seq.*

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold: Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their developement have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of Joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being;[1] they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of Eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like Sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,[2]
The dread of vanished shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow?—What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own

1. [Compare—
"Come, blessed barrier between day and day."
"Sonnet to Sleep," *Works* of W. Wordsworth, 1889, p. 354.]

2. [Compare—
". . . the night's dismay
Saddened and stunned the coming day."
The Pains of Sleep, lines 33, 34, by S. T. Coleridge,
Poetical Works, 1893, p. 170.]

With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.[1]
I would recall a vision which I dreamed
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.[2]

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scattered at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crowned with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fixed,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the Boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The Maid was on the eve of Womanhood;
The Boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him: he had looked
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza vi. lines 1–4, *note*, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 219.]

2. [Compare—

"With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour."

Cain, act i. sc. 1.]

But trembled on her words; she was his sight,[i. 1]
For his eye followed hers, and saw with hers,
Which coloured all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,[2]
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,[3]
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestowed on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honoured race.[4]—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another: even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed[5]
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

i. —— *she was his sight,*
For never did he turn his glance until
Her own had led by gazing on an object.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

"Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me."
To Anthea, etc., by Robert Herrick.]

2. [Compare—

". . . the river of your love,
Must in the ocean of your affection
To me, be swallowed up."
Massinger's *Unnatural Combat*, act iii. sc. 4.]

3. [Compare—

"The hot blood ebbed and flowed again."
Parisina, line 226, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 515.]

4. ["Annesley Lordship is owned by Miss Chaworth, a minor heiress of the Chaworth family."—Throsby's *Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire*, 1797, ii. 270.]

5. ["Moore, commenting on this (*Life*, p. 28), tells us that the image of the lover's steed was suggested by the Nottingham race-ground . . . nine miles off, and . . . lying in a hollow, and totally hidden from

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparisoned:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,[1]
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he leaned
His bowed head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-entered there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge,[2] that his heart
Was darkened with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropped the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he passed
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,

view. . . . Mary Chaworth, in fact, was looking for her lover's steed along the road as it winds up the common from Hucknall."—"A Byronian Ramble," *Athenæum*, No. 357, August 30, 1834.]

1. [Moore (*Life*, p. 28) regards "the antique oratory," as a poetical equivalent for Annesley Hall; but *vide ante*, the Introduction to *The Dream*, p. 31.]

2. [Compare—

"Love by the object loved is soon discerned."
Story of Rimini, by Leigh Hunt, Canto III. ed. 1844, p. 22.

The line does not occur in the first edition, published early in 1816, or, presumably, in the MS. read by Byron in the preceding year. (See Letter to Murray, November 4, 1815.)]

And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repassed that hoary threshold more.[1]

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams: he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noontide sultriness,
Couched among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruined walls that had survived the names
Of those who reared them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fastened near a fountain; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumbered around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.[2]

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One

1. [Byron once again revisited Annesley Hall in the autumn of 1808 (see his lines, "Well, thou art happy," and "To a Lady," etc., *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 277, 282, *note* 1); but it is possible that he avoided the "massy gate" ("arched over and surmounted by a clock and cupola") of set purpose, and entered by another way. He would not lightly or gladly have taken a liberty with the actual prosaic facts in a matter which so nearly concerned his personal emotions (*vide ante*, the Introduction to *The Dream*, p. 31).]

2. ["This is true *keeping*—an Eastern picture perfect in its foreground, and distance, and sky, and no part of which is so dwelt upon or laboured as to obscure the principal figure."—Sir Walter Scott, *Quarterly Review*, No. xxxi. "Byron's Dream" is the subject of a well-known picture by Sir Charles Eastlake.]

Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.[1]
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repressed affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which preyed
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was returned.—I saw him stand
Before an Altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight[2] of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock[3]

1. [Compare—

"Then Cythna turned to me and from her eyes
Which swam with unshed tears," etc.
Shelley's *Revolt of Islam* ("Laon and Cythna"),
Canto XII. stanza xxii. lines 2, 3, *Poetical Works*, 1829, p. 48.]

2. [An old servant of the Chaworth family, Mary Marsden, told Washington Irving (*Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey*, 1835, p. 204) that Byron used to call Mary Chaworth "his bright morning star of Annesley." Compare the well-known lines—

"She was a form of Life and Light,
That, seen, became a part of sight;
And rose, where'er I turned mine eye,
The Morning-star of Memory!"
The Giaour, lines 1127-1130,
Poetical Works, 1900, iii. 136, 137.]

3. ["This touching picture agrees closely, in many of its circumstances, with Lord Byron's own prose account of the wedding in his Memoranda; in which he describes himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his

That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reeled around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustomed hall,
And the remembered chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love;—Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The Queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;

wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down—he repeated the words after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes—his thoughts were elsewhere: and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the bystanders to find that he was —married."—*Life*, p. 272.

Medwin, too, makes Byron say (*Conversations, etc.*, 1824, p. 46) that he "trembled like a leaf made the wrong responses, and after the ceremony called her (the bride) Miss Milbanke." All that can be said of Moore's recollection of the "memoranda," or Medwin's repetition of so-called conversations (reprinted almost *verbatim* in *Life, Writings, Opinions, etc.*, 1825, ii. 227, *seq.*, as "Recollections of the Lately Destroyed Manuscript," etc.), is that they tend to show that Byron meant *The Dream* to be taken literally as a record of actual events. He would not have forgotten by July, 1816, circumstances of great import which had taken place in December, 1815; and he is either lying of malice prepense or telling "an ower true tale."]

And forms, impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight, familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness—and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real![1, 1]

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compassed round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mixed
In all which was served up to him, until,
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,[2]
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,

i. —— *the glance*
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
For it becomes the telescope of truth,
And shows us all things naked as they are.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

"Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor Worth nor Beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such."

Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza cxxiii. lines 1–5,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 420.]

2. Mithridates of Pontus. [Mithridates, King of Pontus (B.C. 120–63), surnamed Eupator, succeeded to the throne when he was only eleven years of age. He is said to have safeguarded himself against the designs of his enemies by drugging himself with antidotes against poison, and so effectively that, when he was an old man, he could not poison himself, even when he was minded to do so—"ut ne volens quidem senex veneno mori potuerit."—Justinus, *Hist.*, lib. xxxvii. cap. ii.

According to Medwin (*Conversations*, p. 118), Byron made use of the same illustration in speaking of Polidori's death (April, 1821), which was probably occasioned by "poison administered to himself" (see *Letters*, 1899, iii. 285).]

But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: [1] with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe [2]
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was opened wide,
And voices from the deep abyss revealed [3]
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

July, 1816.

[First published, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

1. [Compare—

"Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends."
Childe Harold, Canto III. stanza xiii. line 1.

". . . and to me
High mountains are a feeling."
Ibid., stanza lxxii. lines 2, 3,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 223, 261.]

2. [Compare—

"Ye Spirits of the unbounded Universe!"
Manfred, act i. sc. 1, line 29, *vide post*, p. 86.]

3. [Compare *Manfred*, act ii. sc. 2, lines 79–91; and *ibid.*, act iii sc. 1, lines 34–39; and sc. 4, lines 112–117, *vide post*, pp. 105, 121, 135.]

DARKNESS.[1, 1]

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguished, and the stars

1. In the original MS. *A Dream.*

1. [Sir Walter Scott (*Quarterly Review*, October, 1816, vol. xvi. p. 204) did not take kindly to *Darkness*. He regarded the "framing of such phantasms" as "a dangerous employment for the exalted and teeming imagination of such a poet as Lord Byron. The waste of boundless space into which they lead the poet, the neglect of precision which such themes may render habitual, make them in respect to poetry what mysticism is to religion." Poetry of this kind, which recalled "the wild, unbridled, and fiery imagination of Coleridge," was a novel and untoward experiment on the part of an author whose "peculiar art" it was "to show the reader where his purpose tends." The resemblance to Coleridge is general rather than particular. It is improbable that Scott had ever read *Limbo* (first published in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817), an attempt to depict the "mere horror of blank nought-at-all;" but it is possible that he had in his mind the following lines (384–390) from *Religious Musings*, in which "the final destruction is impersonated" (see Coleridge's *note*) in the "red-eyed Fiend:"—

> "For who of woman born may paint the hour,
> When seized in his mid course, the Sun shall wane,
> Making the noon ghastly! Who of woman born
> May image in the workings of his thought,
> How the black-visaged, red-eyed Fiend outstretched
> Beneath the unsteady feet of Nature groans
> In feverous slumbers?"
>
> *Poetical Works*, 1893, p. 60.

Another and a less easily detected source of inspiration has been traced (see an article on Campbell's *Last Man*, in the *London Magazine and Review*, 1825, New Series, i. 588, *seq.*) to a forgotten but once popular novel entitled *The Last Man, or Omegarus and Syderia, a Romance in Futurity* (two vols. 1806). Kölbing (*Prisoner of Chillon, etc.*, pp. 136–140) adduces numerous quotations in support of this contention. The following may serve as samples: "As soon as the earth had lost with the moon her guardian star, her decay became more rapid. . . . Some, in their madness, destroyed the instruments of husbandry, others in deep despair summoned death to their relief. Men began to look on each other with eyes of enmity" (i. 105). "The sun exhibited signs of decay, its surface turned pale, and its beams were frigid. The northern nations dreaded perishing by intense cold . . . and fled to the torrid zone to court the sun's beneficial rays" (i. 120). "The reign of Time was over, ages of Eternity were going to begin; but at the same moment Hell shrieked with rage, and the sun and stars were extinguished. The gloomy night of chaos enveloped the world, plaintive sounds issued from

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy Earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chilled into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crownéd kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the World contained;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguished with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down

mountains, rocks, and caverns,—Nature wept, and a doleful voice was heard exclaiming in the air, 'The human race is no more!'" (ii. 197).

It is difficult to believe that Byron had not read, and more or less consciously turned to account, the imagery of this novel; but it is needless to add that any charge of plagiarism falls to the ground. Thanks to a sensitive and appreciative ear and a retentive memory, Byron's verse is interfused with manifold strains, but, so far as *Darkness* is concerned, his debt to Coleridge or the author of *Omegarus and Syderia* is neither more nor less legitimate than the debt to Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Joel, which a writer in the *Imperial Magazine* (1828, x. 699), with solemn upbraidings, lays to his charge.

The duty of acknowledging such debts is, indeed, "a duty of imperfect obligation." The well-known lines in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*—

"Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue!"

is surely an echo of an earlier prophecy from the pen of the author of *Omegarus and Syderia:* "In the center the heavens were seen darkened by legions of armed vessels, making war on each other! . . . The soldiers fell in frightful numbers. . . . Their blood stained the soft verdure of the trees, and their scattered bleeding limbs covered the fields and the roofs of the labourers' cottages" (i. 68). But such "conveyings" are honourable to the purloiner. See, too, the story of the battle between the Vulture-cavalry and the Sky-gnats, in Lucian's *Veræ Historiæ*, i. 16.]

And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenchéd hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past World; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnashed their teeth and howled: the wild birds shrieked,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawled
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food:
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again:—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: no Love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was Death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devoured,
Even dogs assailed their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famished men at bay,
Till hunger clung them,[1] or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famished by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies: they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place

1. ["If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee."
Macbeth, act v. sc. 5, lines 38–40.

Fruit is said to be "clung" when the skin shrivels, and a corpse when the face becomes wasted and gaunt.]

Where had been heaped a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld [1]
Each other's aspects—saw, and shrieked, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The World was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal: as they dropped
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The Moon, their mistress, had expired before;
The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perished; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the Universe.

Diodati, *July*, 1816.
[First published, *Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE,[2]

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.[3]

I STOOD beside the grave of him who blazed
The Comet of a season, and I saw

1. [So, too, Vathek and Nouronihar, in the Hall of Eblis, waited "in direful suspense the moment which should render them to each other . . . objects of terror."—*Vathek*, by W. Beckford, 1887, p. 185.]

2. [Charles Churchill was born in February, 1731, and died at Boulogne, November 4, 1764. The body was brought to Dover and buried in the churchyard attached to the demolished church of St.

The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe

Martin-le-Grand ("a small deserted cemetery in an obscure lane behind [*i.e.* above] the market"). See note by Charles De la Pryme, *Notes and Queries*, 1854, Series I. vol. x. p. 378). There is a tablet to his memory on the south wall of St. Mary's Church, and the present headstone in the graveyard (it was a "plain headstone" in 1816) bears the following inscription :—

"1764.
Here lie the remains of the celebrated
C. CHURCHILL.
'Life to the last enjoy'd, here Churchill lies.'"

Churchill had been one of Byron's earlier models, and the following lines from *The Candidate*, which suggested the epitaph (lines 145–154), were, doubtless, familiar to him :—

"Let one poor sprig of Bay around my head
Bloom whilst I live, and point me out when dead;
Let it (may Heav'n indulgent grant that prayer)
Be planted on my grave, nor wither there;
And when, on travel bound, some rhyming guest
Roams through the churchyard, whilst his dinner's drest,
Let it hold up this comment to his eyes;
Life to the last enjoy'd, *here* Churchill lies;
Whilst (O, what joy that pleasing flatt'ry gives)
Reading my Works he cries—*here* Churchill lives."

Byron spent Sunday, April 25, 1816, at Dover. He was to sail that night for Ostend, and, to while away the time, "turned to Pilgrim" and thought out, perhaps began to write, the lines which were finished three months later at the Campagne Diodati.

"The Grave of Churchill," writes Scott (*Quarterly Review*, October, 1816), "might have called from Lord Byron a deeper commemoration; for, though they generally differed in character and genius, there was a resemblance between their history and character. . . . both these poets held themselves above the opinion of the world, and both were followed by the fame and popularity which they seemed to despise. The writings of both exhibit an inborn, though sometimes ill-regulated, generosity of mind, and a spirit of proud independence, frequently pushed to extremes. Both carried their hatred of hypocrisy beyond the verge of prudence, and indulged their vein of satire to the borders of licentiousness."

Save for the affectation of a style which did not belong to him, and which in his heart he despised, Byron's commemoration of Churchill does not lack depth or seriousness. It was the parallel between their lives and temperaments which awoke reflection and sympathy, and prompted this "natural homily." Perhaps, too, the shadow of impending exile had suggested to his imagination that further parallel which Scott deprecated, and deprecated in vain, "death in the flower of his age, and in a foreign land."]

3. [On the sheet containing the original draft of these lines Lord Byron has written, "The following poem (as most that I have endeavoured to write) is founded on a fact; and this detail is an attempt at a serious imitation of the style of a great poet—its beauties and its

On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I asked
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory tasked,
Through the thick deaths of half a century;
And thus he answered—"Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of Sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave."
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality, and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successless? As I said,[1]
The Architect of all on which we tread,
For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought,
Were it not that all life must end in one,

defects: I say the *style;* for the thoughts I claim as my own. In this, if there be anything ridiculous, let it be attributed to me, at least as much as to Mr. Wordsworth: of whom there can exist few greater admirers than myself. I have blended what I would deem to be the beauties as well as defects of his style; and it ought to be remembered, that, in such things, whether there be praise or dispraise, there is always what is called a compliment, however unintentional." There is, as Scott points out, a much closer resemblance to Southey's "*English Eclogues*, in which moral truths are expressed, to use the poet's own language, 'in an almost colloquial plainness of language,' and an air of quaint and original expression assumed, to render the sentiment at once impressive and *piquant*."]

1. [Compare—

"The under-earth inhabitants—are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?"
A Fragment, lines 23, 24, *vide post*, p. 52.

It is difficult to "extricate" the meaning of lines 19–25, but, perhaps, they are intended to convey a hope of immortality. "As I was speaking, the sexton (the architect) tried to answer my question by taxing his memory with regard to the occupants of the several tombs. He might well be puzzled, for 'Earth is but a tombstone,' covering an amalgam of dead bodies, and, unless in another life soul were separated from soul, as on earth body is distinct from body, Newton himself, who disclosed 'the turnpike-road through the unpaved stars' (*Don Juan*, Canto X. stanza ii. line 4), would fail to assign its proper personality to any given lump of clay."]

Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun,[1]
Thus spoke he,—"I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected[2] tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour,—and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases:"—then most pleased I shook[1]
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 'twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently:—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a softened eye,
On that old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,—
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

Diodati, 1816.
First published, *Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

PROMETHEUS.[3]

I.

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,

1. —— *then most pleased, I shook*
My inmost pocket's most retired nook,
And out fell five and sixpence.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

"But here [*i.e.* in 'the realm of death'] all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past."

Cain, act ii. sc. 2.]

2. ["Selected," that is, by "frequent travellers" (*vide supra*, line 12).]

3. [Byron was a lover and worshipper of Prometheus as a boy. His first English exercise at Harrow was a paraphrase of a chorus of the *Prometheus Vinctus* of Æschylus, line 528, *sq.* (see *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 14). Referring to a criticism on *Manfred* (*Edinburgh Review*,

Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?[1]
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

II.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,[2]
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,

vol. xxviii. p. 431), he writes (October 12, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 174): "The *Prometheus*, if not exactly in my plan, has always been so much in my head, that I can easily conceive its influence over all or any thing that I have written." The conception of an immortal sufferer at once beneficent and defiant, appealed alike to his passions and his convictions, and awoke a peculiar enthusiasm. His poems abound with allusions to the hero and the legend. Compare the first draft of stanza xvi. of the *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte* (*Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 312, *var.* ii.); *The Prophecy of Dante*, iv. 10, *seq.*; the *Irish Avatar*, stanza xii. line 2, etc.]

1. [Compare—

Τοιαῦτ' ἐπηύρου τοῦ φιλανθρώπου τρόπου.
P. V., line 28.

Compare, too—

Θνητοὺς δ' ἐν οἴκτῳ προθέμενος, τούτου τυχεῖν
Οὐκ ἠξιώθην αὐτός.
Ibid., lines 241, 242.]

2. [Compare—

Διὸς γὰρ δυσπαραίτητοι φρένες.
Ibid., line 34.

Compare, too—

. . . γιγνώσκονθ' ὅτι
Τὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης ἐστ' ἀδήριτον σθένος.
Ibid., line 105.]

Which for its pleasure doth create [1]
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die: [2]
The wretched gift Eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,[3]
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,[4]
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:

1. [Compare—

"The maker—call him
Which name thou wilt; he makes but to destroy."

Cain, act i. sc. 1.

Compare, too—

"And the Omnipotent, who makes and crushes."

Heaven and Earth, Part I. sc. 3.]

2. [Compare—

Ὅτῳ θανεῖν μέν ἐστιν οὐ πεπρωμένον.

P. V., line 754.]

3. [Compare—

. . . πάντα προὐξεπίσταμαι
Σκεθρῶς τά μέλλοντα.

Ibid., lines 101, 102.]

4. [Compare—

Θνητοῖς δ' ἀρήγων αὐτὸς εὑρόμην πόνους.

Ibid., line 269.]

Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,[1]
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—an equal to all woes—[i. 2]
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentered recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

Diodati, *July*, 1816.
[First published, *Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

A FRAGMENT.[3]

Could I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of withered flowers,

i. —— *and equal to all woes.*—[*Editions* 1832, *etc.*]

1. [Compare—

"But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity."

Manfred, act i. sc. 2, lines 39, 40, *vide post*, p. 95.]

2. [The edition of 1832 and subsequent issues read "and equal." It is clear that the earlier reading, "an equal," is correct. The spirit opposed by the spirit is an equal, etc. The spirit can also oppose to "its own funereal destiny" a firm will, etc.]

3. [*A Fragment*, which remained unpublished till 1830, was written at the same time as *Churchill's Grave* (July, 1816), and is closely allied to it in purport and in sentiment. It is a questioning of Death! O Death, *what* is thy sting? There is an analogy between exile and death. As Churchill lay in his forgotten grave at Dover, one of "many millions decomposed to clay," so he the absent is dead to the absent, and the absent are dead to him. And what are the dead? the aggregate of nothingness? or are they a multitude of atoms having neither part nor lot one with the other? There is no solution but in the grave. Death alone can unriddle death. The poet's questioning spirit would plunge into the abyss to bring back the answer.]

But bid it flow as now—until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides.

* * * * *

What is this Death?—a quiet of the heart?
The whole of that of which we are a part?
For Life is but a vision—what I see
Of all which lives alone is Life to me,
And being so—the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrancers our hours of rest.
The absent are the dead—for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided—equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea;
It may be both—but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.
The under-earth inhabitants—are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever Man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a sense
Of breathless being?—darkened and intense
As Midnight in her solitude?—Oh Earth!
Where are the past?—and wherefore had they birth?
The dead are thy inheritors—and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the Grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold[1]
Our elements resolved to things untold,

1. [Compare—

"'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the Shade of Death,
Thou communest."

Manfred, act iii. sc. 1, lines 34, *seq.*, *vide post*, p. 121.]

And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more.
* * * * *

Diodati, *July*, 1816.
[First published, *Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 36.]

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN.

Rousseau—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and De Staël—
Leman![1] these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these! wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall:
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,[2]

1. Geneva, Ferney, Copet, Lausanne. [For Rousseau, see *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 277, *note* 1, 300, 301, *note* 18; for Voltaire and Gibbon, *vide ibid.*, pp. 306, 307, *note* 22; and for De Staël, see *Letters*, 1898, ii. 223, *note* 1. Byron, writing to Moore, January 2, 1821, declares, on the authority of Monk Lewis, "who was too great a bore ever to lie," that Madame de Staël alleged this sonnet, "in which she was named with Voltaire, Rousseau, etc.," as a reason for changing her opinion about him—"she could not help it through decency" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 213). It is difficult to believe that Madame de Staël was ashamed of her companions, or was sincere in disclaiming the compliment, though, as might have been expected, the sonnet excited some disapprobation in England. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (February, 1818, vol. 88, p. 122) relieved his feelings by a "Retort Addressed to the Thames"—

"Restor'd to my dear native Thames' bank,
My soul disgusted spurns a Byron's lay,—
. . . . .
Leman may idly boast her Staël, Rousseau,
Gibbon, Voltaire, whom Truth and Justice shun—
. . . . .
Whilst meekly shines midst Fulham's bowers the sun
O'er Sherlock's and o'er Porteus' honour'd graves,
Where Thames Britannia's choicest meads exulting laves."]

2. [Compare—

"Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face."
Childe Harold Canto III. stanza lxviii. line 1,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 257.

The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the Heirs of Immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of Glory real!

Diodati, *July*, 1816.
[First published, *Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.[i.] [1]

I.

THOUGH the day of my Destiny's over,
And the star of my Fate hath declined,[ii.]
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy Soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the Love which my Spirit hath painted[iii.]
It never hath found but in *Thee*.

II.

Then when Nature around me is smiling,[2]
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,[iv.]
Because it reminds me of thine;

i. *Stanzas To* ——.—[*Editions* 1816–1830.]
"Though the Day."—[*MS. in Mrs. Leigh's handwriting.*]
ii. *Though the days of my Glory are over,*
And the Sun of my fame has declined.—[*Dillon MS.*]
iii. —— *had painted.*—[*MS.*]
iv. *I will not* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [The "Stanzas to Augusta" were written in July, at the Campagne Diodati, near Geneva. "Be careful," he says, "in printing the stanzas beginning, 'Though the day of my Destiny's,' etc., which I think well of as a composition."—Letter to Murray, October 5, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 371.]

2. [Compare—

"Dear Nature is the kindest mother still! . . .
To me by day or night she ever smiled."
Childe Harold, Canto II. stanza xxxvii. lines 1, 7,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 122.]

And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,[i.]
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *Thee.*

III.

Though the rock of my last Hope is shivered,[ii.]
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is delivered
To Pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn;
They may torture, but shall not subdue me;
'Tis of *Thee* that I think—not of them.[iii.]

IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slandered, thou never couldst shake; [iv. 1]
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.[v.]

V.

Yet I blame not the World, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one;

i. *As the breasts I reposed in with me.*—[*MS.*]
ii. *Though the rock of my young hope is shivered,*
And its fragments lie sunk in the wave.—[*MS. erased.*]
iii. *There is many a pang to pursue me,*
And many a peril to stem;
They may torture, but shall not subdue me;
They may crush, but they shall not contemn.—[*MS. erased.*]
And I think not of thee but of them.—[*MS. erased.*]
iv. *Though tempted* ——.—[*MS.*]
v. *Though watchful, 'twas but to reclaim me,*
Nor, silent, to sanction a lie.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold,* Canto III. stanzas liii., lv., *Poetical Works,* 1899, ii. 247, 248, *note* 1.]

If my Soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:[1]
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,[i.]
It could not deprive me of *Thee.*

VI.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perished,[ii.]
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherished
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the Desert a fountain is springing,[iii.][2]
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *Thee.*[3]

July 24, 1816.
[First published, *Prisoner of Chillon*, etc., 1816.]

i. *And more than I then could foresee.*
I have met but the fate that hath crost me.—[*MS.*]
ii. *In the wreck of the past* ——.—[*MS.*]
iii. *In the Desert there still are sweet waters,*
In the wild waste a sheltering tree.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

"Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be."
Epistle to Augusta, stanza xii. lines 5, 6, *vide post*, p. 61.

Compare, too—

"But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man."
Childe Harold, Canto III. stanza xii. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 223.]

2. [Byron often made use of this illustration. Compare—

"My Peri! ever welcome here!
Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave."
The Bride of Abydos, Canto I. lines 151, 152,
Poetical Works, 1900, iii. 163.]

3. [For Hobhouse's parody of these stanzas, see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 73, 74.]

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA.[1]

I.

My Sister! my sweet Sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
A loved regret which I would not resign.[i.]
There yet are two things in my destiny,—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.[2]

II.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,[ii.]
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past [iii.]
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's [3] fate of yore,—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

i. *Go where thou wilt thou art to me the same—*
A loud regret which I would not resign.—[*MS.*]
ii. *But other cares* ——.—[*MS.*]
iii. *A strange doom hath been ours, but that is past.*—[*MS.*]

1. [These stanzas—"than which," says the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1831, "there is nothing, perhaps, more mournfully and desolately beautiful in the whole range of Lord Byron's poetry," were also written at Diodati, and sent home to be published, if Mrs. Leigh should consent. She decided against publication, and the "Epistle" was not printed till 1830. Her first impulse was to withhold her consent to the publication of the "Stanzas to Augusta," as well as the "Epistle," and to say, "Whatever is addressed to me do not publish," but on second thoughts she decided that "the *least objectionable* line will be *to let them be published.*"—See her letters to Murray, November 1, 8, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 366, *note* 1.]

2. [Compare—

"Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister!"
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza clxxvii. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 456.]

3. ["Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage

III.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlooked or unforeseen,
I have sustained my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox;[1]
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

IV.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marred
The gift,—a fate, or will, that walked astray;[1]
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

V.

Kingdoms and Empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have rolled
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something—I know not what—does still uphold

1. *I am not yet o'erwhelmed that I shall ever lean*
A thought upon such Hope as daily mocks.—[*MS. erased.*]

without a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of 'Foul-weather Jack' [or 'Hardy Byron'].

"'But, though it were tempest-toss'd,
Still his bark could not be lost.'

He returned safely from the wreck of the *Wager* (in Anson's voyage), and many years after circumnavigated the world, as commander of a similar expedition" (Moore). Admiral the Hon. John Byron (1723–1786), next brother to William, fifth Lord Byron, published his *Narrative* of his shipwreck in the *Wager* in 1768, and his *Voyage round the World* in the *Dolphin*, in 1767 (*Letters*, 1898, i. 3).]

1. [For Byron's belief in predestination, compare *Childe Harold*, Canto I. stanza lxxxiii. line 9, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 74, *note* 1.]

A spirit of slight patience;—not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase Pain.

VI.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me—or, perhaps, a cold despair
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,[i.]
And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.[ii.]

VII.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt,
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,[iii.]
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love—but none like thee.[iv.]

VIII.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
Here to be lonely is not desolate,[1]
For much I view which I could most desire,

i. *For to all such may change of soul refer.*—[*MS.*]
ii. *Have hardened me to this—but I can see*
Things which I still can love—but none like thee.—
[*MS. erased.*]
iii. { *Before I had to study far more useless books.*—[*MS. erased.*]
{ *Ere my young mind was fettered down to books.*
iv. *Some living things* ——.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—
"Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, when we are *least* alone."
Childe Harold, Canto III. stanza xc. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 272.]

And, above all, a Lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.[1]

IX.

Oh that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show;—
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my altered eye.[1]

X.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make,
Ere that or thou can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resigned for ever, or divided far.

XI.

The world is all before me; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her Summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

XII.

I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not;—for at length I see

i. *And think of such things with a childish eye.*—[*MS.*]

1. [For a description of the lake at Newstead, see *Don Juan*, Canto XIII. stanza lvii.]

Such scenes as those wherein my life begun— [1]
The earliest—even the only paths for me— [i.]
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The Passions which have torn me would have slept;
I had not suffered, and *thou* hadst not wept.

XIII.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a Name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

XIV.

And for the future, this world's future may [ii.]
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day; [iii.]
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share

i. *The earliest were the only paths for me.*
The earliest were the paths and meant for me.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Yet could I but expunge from out the book*
Of my existence all that was entwined.—[*MS. erased.*]
iii. *My life has been too long—if in a day*
I have survived ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Compare—

"He who first met the Highland's swelling blue,
Will love each peak, that shows a kindred hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace."
The Island, Canto II. stanza xii. lines 9–12.

His "friends are mountains." He comes back to them as to a "holier land," where he may find not happiness, but peace.

Moore was inclined to attribute Byron's "love of mountain prospects" in his childhood to the "after-result of his imaginative recollections of that period," but (as Wilson, commenting on Moore, suggests) it is easier to believe that the "high instincts" of the "poetic child" did not wait for association to consecrate the vision (*Life*, p. 8).]

Of life which might have filled a century,[1]
Before its fourth in time had passed me by.

XV.

And for the remnant which may be to come[i.]
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, Happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther.—Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around,
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

XVI.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
We were and are—I am, even as thou art—[ii.]
Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From Life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined—let Death come slow or fast,[iii.]
The tie which bound the first endures the last!

[First published, *Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 38–41.]

i. *And for the remnants* ——.—[*MS.*]
ii. *Whate'er betide* ——.—[*MS.*]
iii. *We have been and we shall be* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Byron often insists on this compression of life into a yet briefer span than even mortality allows. Compare—

"He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life," etc.
Childe Harold, Canto III. stanza v. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 218, *note* 1.

Compare, too—

"My life is not dated by years—
There are moments which act as a plough," etc.
Lines to the Countess of Blessington, stanza 4.]

LINES ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL.[1]

And thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee;
And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near;
Methought that Joy and Health alone could be
Where I was *not*—and pain and sorrow here!
And is it thus?—it is as I foretold,
And shall be more so; for the mind recoils
Upon itself, and the wrecked heart lies cold,
While Heaviness collects the shattered spoils.
It is not in the storm nor in the strife
We feel benumbed, and wish to be no more,
But in the after-silence on the shore,
When all is lost, except a little life.

I am too well avenged!—but 'twas my right;
Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert not sent
To be the Nemesis who should requite—[2]
Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.

1. ["These verses," says John Wright (ed. 1832, x. 207), "of which the opening lines (1–6) are given in Moore's *Notices, etc.* (1830, ii. 36), were written immediately after the failure of the negotiation . . . [*i.e.* the intervention] of Madame de Staël, who had persuaded Byron 'to write a letter to a friend in England, declaring himself still willing to be reconciled to Lady Byron' (*Life*, p. 321), but were not intended for the public eye." The verses were written in September, and it is evident that since the composition of *The Dream* in July, another "change had come over" his spirit, and that the mild and courteous depreciation of his wife as "a gentle bride," etc., had given place to passionate reproach and bitter reviling. The failure of Madame de Staël's negotiations must have been to some extent anticipated, and it is more reasonable to suppose that it was a rumour or report of the "one serious calumny" of Shelley's letter of September 29, 1816, which provoked him to fury, and drove him into the open maledictions of *The Incantation* (published together with the *Prisoner of Chillon*, but afterwards incorporated with *Manfred*, act i. sc. 1, *vide post*, p. 91), and the suppressed "lines," written, so he told Lady Blessington (*Conversations, etc.*, 1834, p. 79) "on reading in a newspaper 'that Lady Byron had been ill.]

2. [Compare—

". . . that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near."

Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza cxxxii. lines 6, 7,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 427.]

Mercy is for the merciful!—if thou
Hast been of such, 'twill be accorded now.
Thy nights are banished from the realms of sleep:—[1]
Yes! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel
A hollow agony which will not heal,
For thou art pillowed on a curse too deep;
Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap
The bitter harvest in a woe as real!
I have had many foes, but none like thee;
For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,
And be avenged, or turn them into friend;
But thou in safe implacability
Hadst nought to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,
And in my love, which hath but too much yielded,
And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare;
And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth,
And the wild fame of my ungoverned youth—
On things that were not, and on things that are—
Even upon such a basis hast thou built
A monument, whose cement hath been guilt!
The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,[2]
And hewed down, with an unsuspected sword,
Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life
Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart,
Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,
And found a nobler duty than to part.
But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,
Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,

1. [Compare—

"Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy Spirit shall not sleep.
. . . . . .
Nor to slumber nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny."

The Incantation, lines 201, 202, 254, 255,
Manfred, act i. sc. 1, *vide post*, pp. 92, 93.]

2. [Compare "I suppose now I shall never be able to shake off my sables in public imagination, more particularly since my moral . . . [Clytemnestra?] clove down my fame" (Letter to Moore, March 10, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 72). The same expression, "my *moral* Clytemnestra," is applied to his wife in a letter to Lord Blessington, dated April 6, 1823. It may be noted that it was in April, 1823, that Byron presented a copy of the "Lines," etc., to Lady Blessington (*Conversations, etc.*, 1834, p. 79).]

For present anger, and for future gold—
And buying others' grief at any price.[1]
And thus once entered into crooked ways,
The early truth, which was thy proper praise,[2]
Did not still walk beside thee—but at times,
And with a breast unknowing its own crimes,
Deceit, averments incompatible,
Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell
In Janus-spirits—the significant eye
Which learns to lie with silence—the pretext[3]
Of prudence, with advantages annexed—
The acquiescence in all things which tend,
No matter how, to the desired end—
All found a place in thy philosophy.
The means were worthy, and the end is won—
I would not do by thee as thou hast done!

September, 1816.

[First published, *New Monthly Magazine*, August, 1832, vol. xxxv. pp. 142, 143.]

1. [Compare—

"By thy delight in others' pain."

Manfred, act i. sc. 1, line 248, *vide post*, p. 93.]

2. [Compare—

". . . but that high Soul secured the heart,
And panted for the truth it could not hear."

A Sketch, lines 18, 19, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 541.]

3. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza cxxxvi. lines 6–9, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 430.]

MONODY ON THE DEATH

OF

THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

INTRODUCTION TO *MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.*

WHEN Moore was engaged on the Life of Sheridan, Byron gave him some advice. "Never mind," he says, "the angry lies of the humbug Whigs. Recollect that he was an Irishman and a clever fellow, and that we have had some very pleasant days with him. Don't forget that he was at school at Harrow, where, in my time, we used to show his name—R. B. Sheridan, 1765—as an honour to the walls. Depend upon it that there were worse folks going, of that gang, than ever Sheridan was" (Letter to Moore, September 19, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 261).

It does not appear that Byron had any acquaintance with Sheridan when he wrote the one unrejected Address which was spoken at the opening of Drury Lane Theatre, October 10, 1812, but that he met him for the first time at a dinner which Rogers gave to Byron and Moore, on or before June 1, 1813. Thenceforward, as long as he remained in England (see his letter to Rogers, April 16, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 281, *note* 1), he was often in his company, "sitting late, drinking late," not, of course, on terms of equality and friendship (for Sheridan was past sixty, and Byron more than thirty years younger), but of the closest and pleasantest intimacy. To judge from the tone of the letter to Moore (*vide supra*) and of numerous entries in his diaries, during Sheridan's life and after his death, he was at pains not to pass judgment on a man whom he greatly admired and sincerely pitied, and whom he felt that he had no right to despise. Body and soul, Byron was of different stuff from Sheridan, and if he "had lived to his age," he would have passed over "the red-hot ploughshares" of life and conduct, not unscathed, but stoutly and unconsumed. So much easier is it to live down character than to live through temperament.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (born October 30, 1751) died July 7, 1816. *The Monody* was written at the Campagne

Diodati, on July 17, at the request of Douglas Kinnaird. "I did as well as I could," says Byron; "but where I have not my choice I pretend to answer for nothing" (Letter to Murray, September 29, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 366). He told Lady Blessington, however, that his "feelings were never more excited than while writing it, and that every word came direct from the heart" (*Conversations, etc.*, p. 241).

The MS., in the handwriting of Claire, is headed, "Written at the request of D. Kinnaird, Esq., Monody on R. B. Sheridan. Intended to be spoken at Dy. L^{e} T. Diodati, Lake of Geneva, July 18th, 1816. Byron."

The first edition was entitled *Monody on the Death of the Right Honourable R. B. Sheridan.* Written at the request of a Friend. To be spoken at Drury Lane Theatre, London. Printed for John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1816.

It was spoken by Mrs. Davison at Drury Lane Theatre, September 7, and published September 9, 1816.

When the *Monody* arrived at Diodati Byron fell foul of the title-page: "'The request of a Friend:'—

'Obliged by Hunger and request of friends.'

"I will request you to expunge that same, unless you please to add, 'by a person of quality, or of wit and honour about town.' Merely say, 'written to be spoken at D[rury] L[ane]'" (Letter to Murray, September 30, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 367). The first edition had been issued, and no alteration could be made, but the title-page of a "New Edition," 1817, reads, "*Monody, etc.* Spoken at Drury Lane Theatre. By Lord Byron."]

Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A. pinx

Walker & Cockerell, ph. sc

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

from the picture in the possession of

Mrs. Horace Lym at Foxwold Chase

MONODY ON THE DEATH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN,

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE, LONDON.

When the last sunshine of expiring Day
In Summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause—
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime—
Who hath not shared that calm, so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord, and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?[1]
'Tis not harsh sorrow, but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear,
Unmixed with worldly grief or selfish stain—
Shed without shame, and secret without pain.
Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the hills,

1. [Compare—

"As 'twere the twilight of a former Sun."

Churchill's Grave, line 26, *vide ante*, p. 48.]

So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath passed from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeathed—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun, but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind; 30
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling Soul,
Which all embraced, and lightened over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charmed council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride.
When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan 41
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from Man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips, and blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised.[1]

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm,
The gay creations of his spirit charm,[2]

1. [Sheridan's first speech on behalf of the Begum of Oude was delivered February 7, 1787. After having spoken for five hours and forty minutes he sat down, "not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the Gallery joined" (*Critical . . . Essays*, by T. B. Macaulay, 1843, iii. 443). So great was the excitement that Pitt moved the adjournment of the House. The next year, during the trial of Warren Hastings, he took part in the debates on June 3, 6, 10, 13, 1788. "The conduct of the part of the case relating to the Princesses of Oude was intrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity of the public to hear him was unbounded. . . . It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived . . . to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration" (*ibid.*, iii. 451, 452).]

2. [*The Rivals*, *The Scheming Lieutenant*, and *The Duenna* were

The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A Halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.
But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—ah! little do they know
That what to them seemed Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fixed for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret Enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy.
The foe, the fool, the jealous, and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in other's pain—
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!
These are his portion—but if joined to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,[1]

played for the first time at Covent Garden, January 17, May 2, and November 21, 1775. *A Trip to Scarborough* and the *School for Scandal* were brought out at Drury Lane, February 24 and May 8, 1777; the *Critic*, October 29, 1779; and *Pizarro*, May 24, 1799.]

1. [Only a few days before his death, Sheridan wrote thus to Rogers: "I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted. They are going to put the carpets out of window, and break into Mrs. S.'s room and *take me*. For God's sake let me see you!" (Moore's *Life of Sheridan*, 1825, ii. 455).

To soothe Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid Rage, and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness:—
If such may be the Ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from Heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turned to thunder—scorch, and burst.[i.]

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,

i. *Abandoned by the skies, whose beams have nurst*
Their very thunders, lighten—scorch, and burst.—[*MS.*]

The extent and duration of Sheridan's destitution at the time of his last illness and death have been the subject of controversy. The statements in Moore's *Life* (1825) moved George IV. to send for Croker and dictate a long and circumstantial harangue, to the effect that Sheridan and his wife were starving, and that their immediate necessities were relieved by the (then) Prince Regent's agent, Taylor Vaughan (Croker's *Correspondence and Diaries*, 1884, i. 288–312). Mr. Fraser Rae, in his *Life of Sheridan* (1896, ii. 284), traverses the king's apology in almost every particular, and quotes a letter from Charles Sheridan to his half-brother Tom, dated July 16, 1816, in which he says that his father "almost slumbered into death, and that the reports . . . in the newspapers (*vide, e.g.*, *Morning Chronicle*, July, 1816) of the privations and want of comforts were unfounded."

Moore's sentiments were also expressed in "some verses" (*Lines on the Death of SH—R—D—N*), which were published in the newspapers, and are reprinted in the *Life*, 1825, ii. 462, and *Poetical Works*, 1850, p. 400—

"How proud they can press to the funeral array
Of one whom they shunned in his sickness and sorrow!
How bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,
Whose pall shall be held up by nobles to-morrow.
. . . . . .
Was *this*, then, the fate of that high-gifted man,
The pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall,
The orator—dramatist—minstrel, who ran
Through each mode of the lyre, and was master of all?"]

To mourn the vanished beam, and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.
Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!*[1]
Whose words were sparks of Immortality!
Ye Bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your Master—emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence![2]
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While Powers of mind almost of boundless range,[3]
Complete in kind, as various in their change,
While Eloquence—Wit—Poesy—and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan![4]

1. Fox—Pitt—Burke. ["I heard Sheridan only once, and that briefly; but I liked his voice, his manner, and his wit: he is the only one of them I ever wished to hear at greater length."—*Detached Thoughts*, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 413.]

2. ["In society I have met Sheridan frequently: he was superb! . . . I have seen him cut up Whitbread, quiz Madame de Staël, annihilate Colman, and do little less by some others . . . of good fame and abilities. . . . I have met him in all places and parties, . . . and always found him very convivial and delightful."—*Ibid.*, pp. 413, 414.]

3. ["The other night we were all delivering our respective and various opinions on him, . . . and mine was this:—'Whatever Sheridan has done or chosen to do has been, *par excellence*, always the *best* of its kind. He has written the *best* comedy (*School for Scandal*), the *best* drama (in my mind, far before that St. Giles's lampoon, the *Beggar's Opera*), the best farce (the *Critic*—it is only too good for a farce), and the best Address ('Monologue on Garrick'), and, to crown all, delivered the very best Oration (the famous Begum Speech) ever conceived or heard in this country.'"—*Journal*, December 17, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 377.]

4. [It has often been pointed out (*e.g. Notes and Queries*, 1855, Series I. xi. 472) that this fine metaphor may be traced to Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. The subject is Zerbino, the son of the King of Scotland—

"Non è vu si bello in tante altre persone:
Natura il fece e poi ruppe la stampa."
Canto X. stanza lxxxiv. lines 5, 6.]

MANFRED:

A DRAMATIC POEM.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
[*Hamlet*, Act i. Scene 5, Lines 166, 167.]

[*Manfred*, a choral tragedy in three acts, was performed at Covent Garden Theatre, October 29—November 14, 1834 [Denvil (afterwards known as "Manfred" Denvil) took the part of "Manfred," and Miss Ellen Tree (afterwards Mrs. Charles Kean) played "The Witch of the Alps"]; at Drury Lane Theatre, October 10, 1863–64 [Phelps played "Manfred," Miss Rosa Le Clercq "The Phantom of Astarte," and Miss Heath "The Witch of the Alps"]; at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester, March 27—April 20, 1867 [Charles Calvert played "Manfred"]; and again, in 1867, under the same management, at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool; and at the Princess's Theatre Royal, London, August 16, 1873 [Charles Dillon played "Manfred;" music by Sir Henry Bishop, as in 1834].

Overtures, etc.

"Music to Byron's *Manfred*" (overture and incidental music and choruses), by R. Schumann, 1850.

"Incidental Music," composed, in 1897, by Sir Alexander Campbell Mackenzie (at the request of Sir Henry Irving); heard (in part only) at a concert in Queen's Hall, May, 1899.

"*Manfred* Symphony" (four tableaux after the Poem by Byron), composed by Tschairowsky, 1885; first heard in London, autumn, 1898]

INTRODUCTION TO *MANFRED*.

BYRON passed four months and three weeks in Switzerland. He arrived at the Hôtel d'Angleterre at Sécheron, on Saturday, May 25, and he left the Campagne Diodati for Italy on Sunday, October 6, 1816. Within that period he wrote the greater part of the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*, he began and finished the *Prisoner of Chillon*, its seven attendant poems, and the *Monody* on the death of Sheridan, and he began *Manfred*.

A note to the "Incantation" (*Manfred*, act i. sc. 1, lines 192–261), which was begun in July and published together with the *Prisoner of Chillon*, December 5, 1816, records the existence of "an unfinished Witch Drama" (First Edition, p. 46); but, apart from this, the first announcement of his new work is contained in a letter to Murray, dated Venice, February 15, 1817 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 52). "I forgot," he writes, "to mention to you that a kind of Poem in dialogue (in blank verse) or drama . . . begun last summer in Switzerland, is finished; it is in three acts; but of a very wild, metaphysical, and inexplicable kind." The letter is imperfect, but some pages of "extracts" which were forwarded under the same cover have been preserved. Ten days later (February 25) he reverts to these "extracts," and on February 28 he despatches a fair copy of the first act. On March 9 he remits the third and final act of his "dramatic poem" (a definition adopted as a second title), but under reserve as to publication, and with a strict injunction to Murray "to submit it to Mr. G[ifford] and to whomsoever you please besides." It is certain that this third act was written at Venice (Letter to Murray, April 14), and it may be taken for granted that the composition of the first two acts belongs to the tour in the Bernese Alps (September 17–29), or to the last days at Diodati (September 30 to October 5, 1816), when the *estro* (see Letter to Murray, January 2, 1817) was upon him, when his "Passions slept," and, in spite of all that had come and gone and could not go, his spirit was uplifted by the "majesty and the power and the glory" of Nature.

Gifford's verdict on the first act was that it was "wonderfully poetical" and "merited publication," but, as Byron had

foreseen, he did not "by any means like" the third act. It was, as its author admitted (Letter to Murray, April 14) "damnably bad," and savoured of the "dregs of a fever," for which the Carnival (Letter to Murray, February 28) or, more probably, the climate and insanitary "palaces" of Venice were responsible. Some weeks went by before there was either leisure or inclination for the task of correction, but at Rome the *estro* returned in full force, and on May 5 a "new third act of *Manfred*—the greater part rewritten," was sent by post to England. *Manfred, a Dramatic Poem*, was published June 16, 1817.

Manfred was criticized by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review* (No. lvi., August, 1817, vol. 28, pp. 418–431), and by John Wilson in the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* (afterwards *Blackwood's, etc.*) (June, 1817, i. 289–295). Jeffrey, as Byron remarked (Letter to Murray, October 12, 1817), was "very kind," and Wilson, whose article "had all the air of being a poet's," was eloquent in its praises. But there was a fly in the ointment. "A suggestion" had been thrown out, "in an ingenious paper in a late number of the *Edinburgh Magazine* [signed H. M. (John Wilson), July, 1817], that the general conception of this piece, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, have been borrowed from the *Tragical History of Dr. Faustus* of Marlow (*sic*);" and from this contention Jeffrey dissented. A note to a second paper on Marlowe's *Edward II.* (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, October, 1817) offered explanations, and echoed Jeffrey's exaltation of *Manfred* above *Dr. Faustus;* but the mischief had been done. Byron was evidently perplexed and distressed, not by the papers in *Blackwood*, which he never saw, but by Jeffrey's remonstrance in his favour; and in the letter of October 12 he is at pains to trace the "evolution" of *Manfred.* "I never read," he writes, "and do not know that I ever saw the *Faustus* of Marlow;" and, again, "As to the *Faustus* of Marlow, I never read, never saw, nor heard of it." "I heard Mr. Lewis translate verbally some scenes of Goethe's *Faust* . . . last summer" (see, too, Letter to Rogers, April 4, 1817), which is all I know of the history of that magical personage; and as to the germs of *Manfred*, they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh . . . when I went over first the Dent, etc., . . . shortly before I left Switzerland. I have the whole scene of *Manfred* before me."

Again, three years later he writes (*à propos* of Goethe's review of *Manfred*, which first appeared in print in his paper *Kunst und Alterthum*, June, 1820, and is republished in Goethe's *Sämmtliche Werke* . . . Stuttgart, 1874, xiii. 640–

642; see *Letters*, 1901, v. Appendix II. "Goethe and Byron," pp. 503–521): "His *Faust* I never read, for I don't know German; but Matthew Monk Lewis (*sic*), in 1816, at Coligny, translated most of it to me *vivâ voce*, and I was naturally much struck with it; but it was the *Staubach* (*sic*) and the *Jungfrau*, and something else, much more than Faustus, that made me write *Manfred*. The first scene, however, and that of Faustus are very similar" (Letter to Murray, June 7, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 36). Medwin (*Conversations, etc.*, pp. 210, 211), who of course had not seen the letters to Murray of 1817 or 1820, puts much the same story into Byron's mouth.

Now, with regard to the originality of *Manfred*, it may be taken for granted that Byron knew nothing about the "Faust-legend," or the "Faust-cycle." He solemnly denies that he had ever read Marlowe's *Faustus*, or the selections from the play in Lamb's *Specimens, etc.* (see Medwin's *Conversations, etc.*, pp. 208, 209, and a hitherto unpublished Preface to *Werner*, vol. v.), and it is highly improbable that he knew anything of Calderon's *El Mágico Prodigioso*, which Shelley translated in 1822, or of "the beggarly elements" of the legend in Hroswitha's *Lapsus et Conversio Theophili Vice-domini*. But Byron's *Manfred* is "in the succession" of scholars who have reached the limits of natural and legitimate science, and who essay the supernatural in order to penetrate and comprehend the "hidden things of darkness." A predecessor, if not a progenitor, he must have had, and there can be no doubt whatever that the primary conception of the character, though by no means the inspiration of the poem, is to be traced to the "Monk's" oral rendering of Goethe's *Faust*, which he gave in return for his "bread and salt" at Diodati. Neither Jeffrey nor Wilson mentioned *Faust*, but the writer of the notice in the *Critical Review* (June, 1817, series v. vol. 5, pp. 622–629) avowed that "this scene (the first) is a gross plagiary from a great poet whom Lord Byron has imitated on former occasions without comprehending. Goethe's *Faust* begins in the same way;" and Goethe himself, in a letter to his friend Knebel, October, 1817, and again in his review in *Kunst und Alterthum*, June, 1820, emphasizes whilst he justifies and applauds the use which Byron had made of his work. "This singular intellectual poet has taken my *Faustus* to himself, and extracted from it the strangest nourishment for his hypochondriac humour. He has made use of the impelling principles in his own way, for his own purposes, so that no one of them remains the same; and it is particularly on this account that I cannot enough admire his genius." Afterwards (see record of a conversation with Herman Fürst

von Pückler, September 14, 1826, *Letters*, v. 511) Goethe somewhat modified his views, but even then it interested him to trace the unconscious transformation which Byron had made of his Mephistopheles. It is, perhaps, enough to say that the link between *Manfred* and *Faust* is formal, not spiritual. The problem which Goethe raised but did not solve, his counterfeit presentment of the eternal issue between soul and sense, between innocence and renunciation on the one side, and achievement and satisfaction on the other, was not the struggle which Byron experienced in himself or desired to depict in his mysterious hierarch of the powers of nature. "It was the *Staubach* and the *Jungfrau*, and something else," not the influence of *Faust* on a receptive listener, which called up a new theme, and struck out a fresh well-spring of the imagination. The *motif* of *Manfred* is remorse—eternal suffering for inexpiable crime. The sufferer is for ever buoyed up with the hope that there is relief somewhere in nature, beyond nature, above nature, and experience replies with an everlasting No! As the sunshine enhances sorrow, so Nature, by the force of contrast, reveals and enhances guilt. *Manfred* is no echo of another's questioning, no expression of a general world-weariness on the part of the time-spirit, but a personal outcry: "De profundis clamavi!"

No doubt, apart from this main purport and essence of his song, his sensitive spirit responded to other and fainter influences. There are "points of resemblance," as Jeffrey pointed out and Byron proudly admitted, between *Manfred* and the *Prometheus* of Æschylus. Plainly, here and there, "the tone and pitch of the composition," and "the victim in the more solemn parts," are Æschylean. Again, with regard to the supernatural, there was the stimulus of the conversation of the Shelleys and of Lewis, brimful of magic and ghost-lore; and lastly, there was the glamour of *Christabel*, "the wild and original" poem which had taken Byron captive, and was often in his thoughts and on his lips. It was no wonder that the fuel kindled and burst into a flame.

For the text of Goethe's review of *Manfred*, and Hoppner's translation of that review, and an account of Goethe's relation with Byron, drawn from Professor A. Brandl's *Goethes Verhältniss zu Byron* (*Goethe-Jahrbuch, Zwanzigster Band*, 1899), and other sources, see *Letters*, 1901, v. Appendix II. pp. 503–521.

For contemporary and other notices of *Manfred*, in addition to those already mentioned, see *Eclectic Review*, July, 1817, New Series, vol. viii. pp. 62–66; *Gentleman's Magazine*, July, 1817, vol. 87, pp. 45–47; *Monthly Review*, July, 1817, Enlarged Series, vol. 83, pp. 300–307; *Dublin University Magazine*, April, 1874, vol. 83, pp. 502–508, etc.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANFRED.
CHAMOIS HUNTER.
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.
MANUEL.
HERMAN.

WITCH OF THE ALPS.
ARIMANES.
NEMESIS.
THE DESTINIES.
SPIRITS, ETC.

The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

MANFRED.[1]

ACT I.

SCENE I.—MANFRED *alone.—Scene, a Gothic Gallery.*[2]—*Time, Midnight.*

Man. THE lamp must be replenished, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But Grief should be the Instructor of the wise;
Sorrow is Knowledge: they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs[3]

1. [The MS. of *Manfred*, now in Mr. Murray's possession, is in Lord Byron's handwriting. A note is prefixed: "The scene of the drama is amongst the higher Alps, partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the mountains." The date, March 18, 1817, is in John Murray's handwriting.]

2. [So, too, Faust is discovered "in a high-vaulted narrow Gothic chamber."]

3. [Compare *Faust*, act i. sc. 1—

"Alas! I have explored
Philosophy, and Law, and Medicine,
And over deep Divinity have pored,
Studying with ardent and laborious zeal."
Anster's *Faust*, 1883, p. 88.]

Of Wonder, and the wisdom of the World,
I have essayed, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men—
But this availed not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me—
But this availed not:—Good—or evil—life—
Powers, passions—all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth.
Now to my task.—
Mysterious Agency!
Ye Spirits of the unbounded Universe![i]
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,[ii]
And Earth's and Ocean's caves familiar things—
I call upon ye by the written charm [1]
Which gives me power upon you—Rise! Appear!
[*A pause.*
They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you [2]—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
Who is undying,—Rise! Appear!——Appear!
[*A pause.*
If it be so.—Spirits of Earth and Air,
Ye shall not so elude me! By a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,

i. *Eternal Agency!*
Ye spirits of the immortal Universe!—[*MS. M.*]
ii. *Of inaccessible mountains are the haunts.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [*Faust* contemplates the sign of the macrocosm, and makes use of the sign of the Spirit of the Earth. *Manfred's* written charm may have been "Abraxas," which comprehended the Greek numerals 365, and expressed the all-pervading spirits of the Universe.]

2. [The Prince of the Spirits is Arimanes, *vide post*, act ii. sc. 4. line 1, *seq.*]

Which had its birthplace in a star condemned,
The burning wreck of a demolished world,
A wandering hell in the eternal Space;
By the strong curse which is upon my Soul,[1]
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will.—Appear!

[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery: it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.*

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bowed,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of Twilight builds,
And the Summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mixed for my pavilion;[i]
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden,
To thine adjuration bowed:
Mortal—be thy wish avowed!

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the Monarch of mountains;
They crowned him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a Diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The Avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The Glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.[ii]

i. *Which is fit for my pavilion.*—[*MS. M.*]
ii. *Or makes its ice delay.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto I. stanza lxxxiii. lines 8, 9.]

I am the Spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his caverned base—
And what with me would'st *Thou?*

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,
Where the Wind is a stranger,
And the Sea-snake hath life,
Where the Mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells,
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm Hall of Coral
The deep Echo rolled—
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering Earthquake
Lies pillowed on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birthplace,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide!

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,
The Stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;

To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sailed well—and yet
'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the Night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The Star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
It was a World as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round Sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosomed not a lovelier star.
The Hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless Comet, and a curse,
The menace of the Universe;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And Thou! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a Power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak Spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What would'st thou, Child of Clay![1] with me?

The SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth—ocean—air—night—mountains—winds—thy Star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
Before thee at thy quest their Spirits are—
What would'st thou with us, Son of mortals—say?

1. [Compare "Creatures of clay, I receive you into mine empire."—*Vathek*, 1887, p. 179.]

Man. Forgetfulness——
First Spirit. Of what—of whom—and why?
Man. Of that which is within me; read it there—
Ye know it—and I cannot utter it.
Spirit. We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators,—each and all,
These shall be thine.
Man. Oblivion—self-oblivion!
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely—what I ask?
Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But—thou may'st die.
Man. Will Death bestow it on me?
Spirit. We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answered?
Man. Ye mock me—but the Power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The Mind—the Spirit—the Promethean spark,[i.]
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though cooped in clay!
Answer, or I will teach you what I am.[ii.]
Spirit. We answer—as we answered; our reply
Is even in thine own words.
Man. Why say ye so?
Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.
Man. I then have called ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.
Spirit. Say—[1]

i. *The Mind which is my Spirit—the high Soul.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Answer—or I will teach ye.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [So the MS., in which the word "say" clearly forms part of the *Spirit's* speech.]

What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us; ask again;
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days—
Man. Accurséd! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!
Spirit. Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?
Man. No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As Music on the waters;[1] and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large Star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one—or all—in your accustomed forms.
Spirit. We have no forms, beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form—in that we will appear.
Man. I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!
Seventh Spirit (*appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure*).[2] Behold!
Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*[3]
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee,
And we again will be——
[*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crushed!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)[4]

When the Moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,

1. [Compare "Stanzas for Music," i. 3, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 435.]
2. [It is evident that the female figure is not that of Astarte, but of the subject of the "Incantation."]
3. [The italics are not indicated in the MS.]
4. N.B.—Here follows the "Incantation," which being already

And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;[1]
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answered owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy Spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a Power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gathered in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turned around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,

transcribed and (I suppose) published I do not transcribe again at present, because you can insert it in MS. here—as it belongs to this place: with its conclusion the 1st Scene closes.

[The "Incantation" was first published in "*The Prisoner of Chillon and Other Poems.* London: Printed for John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1816." Immediately below the title is a note: "The following Poem was a Chorus in an unpublished Witch Drama, which was begun some years ago."]

1. [*Manfred* was done into Italian by a translator "who was unable to find in the dictionaries . . . any other signification of the 'wisp' of this line than 'a bundle of straw.'" Byron offered him two hundred francs if he would destroy the MS., and engage to withhold his hand from all past or future poems. He at first refused; but, finding that the alternative was to be a horsewhipping, accepted the money, and signed the agreement.—*Life*, p. 375, *note*.]

And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a Spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatched the snake,
For there it coiled as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By the cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathomed gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which passed for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel[i]
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;

i. *I do adjure thee to this spell.*—[*MS. M.*]

Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been passed—now wither!

SCENE II.—*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.*—MANFRED *alone upon the cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me,
The spells which I have studied baffle me,
The remedy I recked of tortured me;
I lean no more on superhuman aid;
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulfed in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My Mother Earth![1]
And thou fresh-breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright Eye of the Universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds,
And makes it my fatality to live,—
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of Spirit, and to be
My own Soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased

1. [Compare—

ὦ δῖος αἰθὴρ, κ.τ.λ.
Æschylus, *Prometheus Vinctus*, lines 88–91.]

To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Aye,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,
[*An Eagle passes.*
Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world![1]
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mixed essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will,
Till our Mortality predominates,
And men are—what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,
[*The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*
The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mixed with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;[2]

1. [Compare Hamlet's speech to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (*Hamlet*, act ii. sc. 2, lines 286, *sq.*).]

2. [The germs of this and of several other passages in *Manfred* may be found, as Lord Byron stated, in the Journal of his Swiss tour, which he transmitted to his sister. "Sept. 19, 1816.—Arrived at a lake in the very nipple of the bosom of the Mountain; left our quadrupeds with a Shepherd, and ascended further; came to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead's perspiration fell like rain, making the same dints as in a sieve; the chill of the wind and the snow turned me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hobhouse went to the highest *pinnacle*. . . . The whole of the Mountain superb. A Shepherd on a very steep and high cliff playing upon his *pipe;* very different from *Arcadia*, (where I saw the pastors with a long Musquet instead of a Crook, and pistols in their Girdles). . . . The music of the Cows' bells (for their wealth, like the Patriarchs', is cattle) in the pastures, (which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain), and the Shepherds' shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realized all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral

My soul would drink those echoes. Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment [1]—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so
This way the Chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reached
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance:
I will approach him nearer.

Man. (*not perceiving the other*). To be thus—
Grey-haired with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,[2]
A blighted trunk upon a curséd root,
Which but supplies a feeling to Decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrowed o'er
With wrinkles, ploughed by moments, not by years
And hours, all tortured into ages—hours
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye Avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,

existence:—much more so than Greece or Asia Minor, for there we are a little too much of the sabre and musquet order; and if there is a Crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other:—but this was pure and unmixed—solitary, savage, and patriarchal. . . . As we went, they played the 'Ranz des Vaches' and other airs, by way of farewell. I have lately repeopled my mind with Nature" (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 354, 355).]

1. [Compare—

"Like an unbodied joy, whose race is just begun."
To a Skylark, by P. B. Shelley, stanza iii. line 5.]

2. ["Passed *whole woods of withered pines, all withered;* trunks stripped and barkless, branches lifeless; done by a *single winter*,—their appearance reminded me of me and my family" (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 360).]

Crash with a frequent conflict;[1] but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.
C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.
Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,[i.]
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heaped with the damned like pebbles.—I am giddy.[2]
C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.
Man. Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with Destruction's splinters;
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crushed the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel—thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—[3]

i. *Like foam from the round ocean of old Hell.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["Ascended the Wengen mountain. . . . Heard the Avalanches falling every five minutes nearly—as if God was pelting the Devil down from Heaven with snow balls" (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 359).]

2. ["The clouds rose from the opposite valley, curling up perpendicular precipices like the foam of the Ocean of Hell, during a Spring-tide—it was white, and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appearance. The side we ascended was (of course) not of so precipitous a nature; but on arriving at the summit, we looked down the other side upon a boiling sea of cloud, dashing against the crags on which we stood (these crags on one side quite perpendicular) . . . In passing the masses of snow, I made a snowball and pelted Hobhouse with it" (*ibid.*, pp. 359, 360).]

3. [The fall of the Rossberg took place September 2, 1806. "A huge mass of conglomerate rock, 1000 feet broad and 100 feet thick, detached itself from the face of the mountain (Rossberg or Rufiberg, near Goldau, south of Lake Zug), and slipped down into the valley below, overwhelming the villages of Goldau, Busingen, and Rothen, and part of Lowertz. More than four hundred and fifty human beings perished, and whole herds of cattle were swept away. Five minutes sufficed to complete the work of destruction. The inhabitants were first roused by a loud and grating sound like thunder . . . and beheld

Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal!—for the love
Of Him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him*). Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening Heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
You were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

[*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*

C. Hun. Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:
Away with me——I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl
Spinning around me——I grow blind——What art thou?

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon.—Away with me——
The clouds grow thicker——there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The Chalet will be gained within an hour:
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath washed since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*

the valleys shrouded in a cloud of dust; when it had cleared away they found the face of nature changed."—*Handbook of Switzerland*, Part I. pp. 58, 59.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Cottage among the Bernese Alps.*—MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No—no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
But whither?
Man. It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.
C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?
Man. No matter.
C. Hun. Well, Sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thawed my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly!
Man. Away, away! there's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?
C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.
Man. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,[1]

1. [The critics of the day either affected to ignore or severely censured (*e.g.* writers in the *Critical*, *European*, and *Gentleman's*

And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from Heaven,
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.
C. Hun. Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,[i.]
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience——
Man. Patience—and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey!
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.
C. Hun. Thanks to Heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.
Man. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.
C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no healthful life.
Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!
C. Hun. Why on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.
Man. Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?[1]

i. —— *and some insaner sin.*—[*MS. erased.*]

Magazines) the allusions to an incestuous passion between Manfred and Astarte. Shelley, in a letter to Mrs. Gisborne, November 16, 1819, commenting on Calderon's *Los Cabellos de Absalon*, discusses the question from an ethical as well as critical point of view: "The incest scene between Amon and Tamar is perfectly tremendous. Well may Calderon say, in the person of the former—

'Si sangre sin fuego hiere
Qua fara sangre con fuego.'

Incest is, like many other incorrect things, a very poetical circumstance. It may be the defiance of everything for the sake of another which clothes itself in the glory of the highest heroism, or it may be that cynical rage which, confounding the good and the bad in existing opinions, breaks through them for the purpose of rioting in selfishness and antipathy."—*Works of P. B. Shelley*, 1880, iv. 142.]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza v. lines 1, 2.]

It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.
C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not leave him.
Man. I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distempered dream.
C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?
Man. Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph!
This do I see—and then I look within—
It matters not—my Soul was scorched already!
C. Hun. And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for mine?
Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.
C. Hun. And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreaked revenge
Upon his enemies?
Man. Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved: I never quelled
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest!
And Penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.
Man. I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril's past:
And once again I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE II.—*A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.*

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the Sunbow's rays[1] still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse.[2] No eyes
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,

1. This iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it: this effect lasts till noon. ["Before ascending the mountain, went to the torrent (7 in the morning) again; the Sun upon it forming a *rainbow* of the lower part of all colours, but principally purple and gold; the bow moving as you move; I never saw anything like this; it is only in the Sunshine" (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 359).]

2. ["Arrived at the foot of the Mountain (the Yung frau, *i.e.* the Maiden); Glaciers; torrents; one of these torrents *nine hundred feet* in height of visible descent . . . heard an Avalanche fall, like thunder; saw Glacier—enormous. Storm came on, thunder, lightning, hail; all in perfection, and beautiful. . . . The torrent is in shape curving over the rock, like the *tail* of a white horse streaming in the wind, such as it might be conceived would be that of the '*pale* horse' on which *Death* is mounted in the Apocalypse. It is neither mist nor water, but a something between both; it's immense height . . . gives it a wave, a curve, a spreading here, a condensation there, wonderful and indescribable" (*ibid.*, pp. 357, 358).]

And with the Spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.*

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of Earth's least mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—
Carnationed like a sleeping Infant's cheek,
Rocked by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which Summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty Glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her Heaven,—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the Sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glassed serenity of Soul,[1]
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them—if that he
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch. Son of Earth!
I know thee, and the Powers which give thee power!
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this—what would'st thou with me?

Man. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
The face of the earth hath maddened me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.

1. *Wherein seems glassed* ——.—[*MS. of extract, February* 15, 1817.]

Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?
Man. A boon;—
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.
Witch. I know not that; let thy lips utter it.
Man. Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My Spirit walked not with the souls of men,
Nor looked upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys—my griefs—my passions—and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the Creatures of Clay that girded me
Was there but One who——but of her anon.
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion; but instead,
My joy was in the wilderness,—to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,[1]
Where the birds dare not build—nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new-breaking wave
Of river-stream, or Ocean, in their flow.[2]
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,[3]
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered leaves,
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza lxxii. lines 2, 3, *note* 2.]
2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza clxxxiv. line 3, *note* 2.]
3. [Compare—

"The moving moon went up the sky."
The Ancient Mariner, Part IV. line 263.

Compare, too—

"The climbing moon."
Act iii. sc. 3, line 40.]

For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—crossed me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of Death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From withered bones, and skulls, and heaped up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden.[1] Then I passed
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old-time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled Infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain-dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros,[2] at Gadara,
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until——

Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh! I but thus prolonged my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto II. stanzas v.–xi.]

2. The philosopher Jamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life by Eunapius. It is well told. ["It is reported of him," says Eunapius, "that while he and his scholars were bathing in the hot baths of Gadara, in Syria, a dispute arising concerning the baths, he, smiling, ordered his disciples to ask the inhabitants by what names the two lesser springs, that were fairer than the rest, were called. To which the inhabitants replied, that 'the one was called Love, and the other Love's Contrary, but for what reason they knew not.' Upon which Iamblichus, who chanced to be sitting on the fountain's edge where the stream flowed out, put his hand on the water, and, having uttered a few words, called up from the depths of the fountain a fair-skinned lad, not over-tall, whose golden locks fell in sunny curls over his breast and back, so that he looked like one fresh from the bath; and then, going to the other spring, and doing as he had done before, called up another Amoretto like the first, save that his long-flowing locks now seemed black, now shot with sunny gleams. Whereupon both the Amoretti nestled and clung round Iamblichus as if they had been his own children . . . after this his disciples asked him no more questions."—Eunapii Sardiani *Vitæ Philosophorum et Sophistarum* (28, 29), *Philostratorum*, etc., *Opera*, Paris, 1829, p. 459, lines 20–50.]

As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
But—to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seemed not such to me—
Yet there was One——
Witch. Spare not thyself—proceed.
Man. She was like me in lineaments—her eyes—
Her hair—her features—all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But softened all, and tempered into beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the Universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
I loved her, and destroyed her!
Witch. With thy hand?
Man. Not with my hand, but heart, which broke her heart;
It gazed on mine, and withered. I have shed
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed;
I saw—and could not stanch it.
Witch. And for this—
A being of the race thou dost despise—
The order, which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality——Away!
Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies;—I have gnashed
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have prayed
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted Death—but in the war

Of elements the waters shrunk from me,[1]
And fatal things passed harmless; the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless Demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In Fantasy, Imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Crœsus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dashed me back
Into the gulf of my unfathomed thought.
I plunged amidst Mankind—Forgetfulness[2]
I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found—
And that I have to learn—my Sciences,
My long pursued and superhuman art,
Is mortal here: I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.[i]

Witch. It may be
That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so—in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Man. I will not swear—Obey! and whom? the Spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

Witch. Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough! I may retire then—say!

Man. Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

Man. (*alone*). We are the fools of Time and Terror:
Days

i. *And live—and live for ever.*—[*Specimen sheet.*]

1. [There may be some allusion here to "the squall off Meillerie" on the Lake of Geneva (see Letter to Murray, June 27, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 333).]

2. [Compare the concluding sentence of the Journal in Switzerland (*ibid.*, p. 364).]

Steal on us, and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future—for
In life there is no present—we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill[i]
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing: if they answer not——
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardoned—though he called in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfilled.[1]

i. *As from a bath* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta, (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedæmonians), and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the sophist in his description of Greece.

[The following is the passage from Plutarch: "It is related that when Pausanias was at Byzantium, he cast his eyes upon a young virgin named Cleonice, of a noble family there, and insisted on having her for a mistress. The parents, intimidated by his power, were under the hard necessity of giving up their daughter. The young woman begged that the light might be taken out of his apartment, that she might go to his bed in secresy and silence. When she entered he was asleep, and she unfortunately stumbled upon the candlestick, and threw it down. The noise waked him suddenly, and he, in his confusion, thinking it was an enemy coming to assassinate him, unsheathed a dagger that lay by him, and plunged it into the virgin's heart. After this he could never rest.

If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful,
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.*

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The Moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot [1]

Her image appeared to him every night, and with a menacing tone repeated this heroic verse—

'Go to the fate which pride and lust prepare!'

The allies, highly incensed at this infamous action, joined Cimon to besiege him in Byzantium. But he found means to escape thence; and, as he was still haunted by the spectre, he is said to have applied to a temple at Heraclea, where the *manes* of the dead were consulted. There he invoked the spirit of Cleonice, and entreated her pardon. She appeared, and told him 'he would soon be delivered from all his troubles, after his return to Sparta:' in which, it seems, his death was enigmatically foretold." "Thus," adds the translator in a note, "we find that it was a custom in the pagan as well as in the Hebrew theology to conjure up the spirits of the dead, and that the witch of Endor was not the only witch in the world."—Langhorne's *Plutarch*, 1838, p. 339.

The same story is told in the *Periegesis Græciæ*, lib. iii. cap. xvii., but Pausanias adds, "This was the deed from the guilt of which Pausanias could never fly, though he employed all-various purifications, received the deprecations of Jupiter Phyxius, and went to Phigalea to the Arcadian evocators of souls."—*Descr. of Greece* (translated by T. Taylor), 1794, i. 304, 305.]

1. [Compare—

"But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza lxxiii. lines 6, 7.

Byron did not know, or ignored, the fact that the Jungfrau was first ascended in 1811, by the brothers Meyer, of Aarau.]

Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment[1]—a dead Whirlpool's image:
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes—for to-night
Is our great festival[2]—'tis strange they come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurled down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;
I broke through his slumbers,
I shivered his chain,
I leagued him with numbers—
He's Tyrant again!
With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,
With a Nation's destruction—his flight and despair![3]

1. [Compare—

"And who commanded (and the silence came)
Here let the billows stiffen and have rest?
. . . . . .
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts."

Hymn before Sunrise, etc., by S. T. Coleridge, lines 47, 48, 53.

"Arrived at the Grindenwald; dined, mounted again, and rode to the higher Glacier—twilight, but distinct—very fine Glacier, like *a frozen hurricane*" (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 360).]

2. [The idea of the Witches' Festival may have been derived from the Walpurgisnacht on the Brocken.]

3. [Compare—

"Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
. . . . . .
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet."

Ode from the French, v. 8, 11–14,
Poetical Works, 1900, iii. 435.

Second Voice, without.

The Ship sailed on, the Ship sailed fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—[1]
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The City lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish;
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation;
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation;
This work of a night—
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing!

Compare, too, *Napoleon's Farewell*, stanza 3, *ibid.*, p. 428. The "Voice" prophesies that St. Helena will prove a second Elba, and that Napoleon will "live to fight another day."]

1. [Byron may have had in his mind Thomas Lord Cochrane (1775–1860), "who had done brilliant service in his successive commands—the *Speedy*, *Pallas*, *Impérieuse*, and the flotilla of fire-ships at Basque Roads in 1809." In his Diary, March 10, 1814, he speaks of him as "the stock-jobbing hoaxer" (*Letters*, 1898, ii. 396, *note* 1).]

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The Spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?
Second Des. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.
Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My Sisters and thyself are slow to-night.
Nem. I was detained repairing shattered thrones—
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties—
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh—for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance—and to speak
Of Freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstayed the hour—mount we our clouds!
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Hall of Arimanes.*[1]—*Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire,*[2] *surrounded by the Spirits.*

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth and Air!
Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand

1. [Arimanes, the Aherman of *Vathek*, the Arimanius of Greek and Latin writers, is the Ahriman (or Angra Mainyu, "who is all death," the spirit of evil, the counter-creator) of the *Zend-Avesta*, "Fargard," i. 5 (translated by James Darmesteter, 1895, p. 4). Byron may have

The sceptre of the Elements, which tear
  Themselves to chaos at his high command!
He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
  He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
  He moveth—Earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the Volcanoes rise;
  His shadow is the Pestilence: his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies;[1]
  And Planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;
  To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its Infinite of agonies—
  And his the Spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!
Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!
Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we await
His nod!
Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant. Thy late commands
Have been fulfilled to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

1. *The comets herald through the burning skies.*—
[*Alternative reading in MS.*

got the form Arimanius (*vide* Steph., *Thesaurus*) from D'Herbelot, and changed it to Arimanes.]

2. [The "formidable Eblis" sat on a globe of fire—"in his hand . . . he swayed the iron sceptre that causes . . . all the powers of the abyss to tremble."—*Vathek*, by William Beckford, 1887, p. 178.]

Second Spirit. I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!
Third Spirit. Bow down and worship, slave!—What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!
All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and thy condemnéd clay,
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.
Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.
Fourth Spirit. 'Twill be taught thee.
Man. 'Tis taught already;—many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bowed down my face,
And strewed my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation—for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.
Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory?—Crouch! I say.
Man. Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.
The Spirits. Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces!—
First Des. Hence! Avaunt!—he's mine.
Prince of the Powers invisible! This man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote: his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature—like
Our own; his knowledge, and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science[1]

1. [Compare—

"Sorrow is Knowledge."

Act i. sc. 1, line 10, *vide ante*, p. 85.

But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of Earth and Heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing—which—I who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine—
And thine it may be; be it so, or not—
No other Spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

Nem. What doth he here then?

First Des. Let *him* answer that.

Man. Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

Nem. What would'st thou?

Man. *Thou* canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.

Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?

Ari. Yea.

Nem. Whom wouldst thou
Uncharnel?

Man. One without a tomb—call up
Astarte.[1]

Compare, too—

"Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son!
'All that we know is, nothing can be known.'"
Childe Harold, Canto II. stanza vii. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 103.]

1. [Astarte is the classical form (*vide* Cicero, *De Naturâ Deorum*, iii. 23, and Lucian, *De Syriâ Deâ*, iv.) of Milton's

"Moonéd Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both."

Cicero says that she was married to Adonis, alluding, no doubt, to the myth of the Phœnician Astoreth, who was at once the bride and mother of Tammuz or Adonis.]

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit[1]
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,
Which returned to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear!—Appear!—Appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

[*The Phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*

Man. Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perished leaf.[1]
It is the same! Oh, God! that I should dread
To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the Power which hath broken
The grave which enthralled thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have called thee!

Man. She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answered.

1. *Or dost Qy?*—[*Marginal reading in MS.*]

1. [Compare—

". . . illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza cii. lines 7–9.]

Nem. My power extends no further. Prince of Air!
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.
Ari. Spirit—obey this sceptre!
Nem. Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.
Man. Hear me, hear me—
Astarte! my belovéd! speak to me:
I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other—though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blesséd—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence—in a life
Which makes me shrink from Immortality—
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask, nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art, and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!
For I have called on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hushed boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answered me—many things answered me—
Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatched the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wandered o'er the earth,
And never found thy likeness—Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone.
Speak to me! though it be in wrath;—but say—
I reck not what—but let me hear thee once—
This once—once more!

Phantom of Astarte. Manfred!
Man. Say on, say on—
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!
Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!
Man. Yet one word more—am I forgiven?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. Say, shall we meet again?
Phan. Farewell!
Man. One word for mercy! Say thou lovest me.
Phan. Manfred!
[*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*
Nem. She's gone, and will not be recalled:
Her words will be fulfilled. Return to the earth.
A Spirit. He is convulsed—This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality.
Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
His torture tributary to his will.[1]
Had be been one of us, he would have made
An awful Spirit.
Nem. Hast thou further question
Of our great Sovereign, or his worshippers?
Man. None.
Nem. Then for a time farewell.
Man. We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!
[*Exit* MANFRED.

(*Scene closes.*)

1. [Compare—
". . . a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentered recompense."
Prometheus, iii. 55-57, *vide ante*, p. 51.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*[1]

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour?
Her. It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.
Man. Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?
Her. All, my Lord, are ready:
Here is the key and casket.[2]
Man. It is well:
Thou mayst retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.
Man. (*alone*). There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.

1. [On September 22, 1816 (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 357, *note* 2), Byron rode from Neuhaus, at the Interlaken end of Lake Thun, to the Staubbach. On the way between Matten and Müllinen, not far from the village of Wilderswyl, he passed the baronial Castle of Unspunnen, the traditional castle of Manfred. It is "but a square tower, with flanking round turrets, rising picturesquely above the surrounding brushwood." On the same day and near the same spot he "passed a rock; inscription—two brothers—one murdered the other; just the place for it." Here, according to the Countess Guiccioli, was "the origin of *Manfred*." It is somewhat singular that, on the appearance of *Manfred*, a paper was published in the June number of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, 1817, vol. i. pp. 270–273, entitled, "Sketch of a Tradition related by a Monk in Switzerland." The narrator, who signs himself P. F., professes to have heard the story in the autumn of 1816 from one of the fathers "of Capuchin Friars, not far from Altorf." It is the story of the love of two brothers for a lady with whom they had "passed their infancy." She becomes the wife of the elder brother, and, later, inspires the younger brother with a passion against which he struggles in vain. The fate of the elder brother is shrouded in mystery. The lady wastes away, and her paramour is found dead "in the same pass in which he had met his sister among the mountains." The excuse for retelling the story is that there appeared to be "a striking coincidence in some characteristic features between Lord Byron's drama and the Swiss tradition."]

2. [The "revised version" makes no further mention of the "key and casket;" but in the first draft (*vide infra*, p. 122) they were used by Manfred in calling up Astaroth (*Selections from Byron*, New York, 1900, p. 370).]

If that I did not know Philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fooled the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon," found,[1]
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My Lord, the Abbot of St. Maurice craves[2]
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred!
Man. Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.
Abbot. Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.
Man. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend guest?
Abbot. Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal—my office—
And good intent must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name—a noble name
For centuries: may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpaired!

1. [Byron may have had in his mind a sentence in a letter of C. Cassius to Cicero (*Epist.*, xv. 19), in which he says, "It is difficult to persuade men that goodness is desirable for its own sake τὸ καλὸν δι' αὑτὸ αἱρετὸν); and yet it is true, and may be proved, that pleasure and calm are won by virtue, justice, in a word by goodness (τῷ καλῷ)."]

2. [St. Maurice is in the Rhone valley, some sixteen miles from Villeneuve. The abbey (now occupied by Augustinian monks) was founded in the fourth century, and endowed by Sigismund, King of Burgundy.]

Man. Proceed,—I listen.
Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the Shade of Death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an Anchorite's—were it but holy.
Man. And what are they who do avouch these things?
Abbot. My pious brethren—the scaréd peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril!
Man. Take it.
Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy:
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to Heaven.
Man. I hear thee. This is my reply—whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator—Have I sinned
Against your ordinances? prove and punish![1]

1. [Thus far the text stands as originally written. The rest of the scene as given in the first MS. is as follows:—

"*Abbot.* Then, hear and tremble! For the headstrong wretch
Who in the mail of innate hardihood
Would shield himself, and battle for his sins,
There is the stake on earth—and beyond earth
Eternal——
Man. Charity, most reverend father,
Becomes thy lips so much more than this menace,
That I would call thee back to it: but say,
What would'st thou with me?
Abbot. It may be there are
Things that would shake thee—but I keep them back,
And give thee till to-morrow to repent.
Then if thou dost not all devote thyself
To penance, and with gift of all thy lands
To the Monastery——
Man. I understand thee,—well!
Abbot. Expect no mercy; I have warned thee.

Abbot. My son! I did not speak of punishment,[1]
But penitence and pardon;—with thyself

Man. (*opening the casket*). Stop—
There is a gift for thee within this casket.

[MANFRED *opens the casket, strikes a light, and burns some incense.*

Ho! Ashtaroth!

The DEMON ASHTAROTH *appears, singing as follows:—*

The raven sits
On the Raven-stone,*
And his black wing flits
O'er the milk-white bone;
To and fro, as the night-winds blow,
The carcass of the assassin swings;
And there alone, on the Raven-stone,
The raven flaps his dusky wings.

The fetters creak—and his ebon beak
Croaks to the close of the hollow sound;
And this is the tune, by the light of the Moon,
To which the Witches dance their round—
Merrily—merrily—cheerily—cheerily—
Merrily—merrily—speeds the ball:
The dead in their shrouds, and the Demons in clouds,
Flock to the Witches' Carnival.

Abbot. I fear thee not—hence—hence—
Avaunt thee, evil One!—help, ho! without there!
Man. Convey this man to the Shreckhorn—to its peak—
To its extremest peak—watch with him there
From now till sunrise; let him gaze, and know
He ne'er again will be so near to Heaven.
But harm him not; and, when the morrow breaks,
Set him down safe in his cell—away with him!
Ash. Had I not better bring his brethren too,
Convent and all, to bear him company?
Man. No, this will serve for the present. Take him up.
Ash. Come, Friar! now an exorcism or two,
And we shall fly the lighter.

ASHTAROTH *disappears with the* ABBOT, *singing as follows:—*

A prodigal son, and a maid undone,[i.]
And a widow re-wedded within the year;

i. *A prodigal son—and a pregnant nun, nun,*
And a widow re-wedded within the year—
And a calf at grass—and a priest at mass,
Are things which every day appear.—[*MS. erased.*]

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* "Raven-stone (Rabenstein), a translation of the German word for the gibbet, which in Germany and Switzerland is permanent, and made of stone." [Compare *Werner*, act ii. sc. 2. Compare, too, Anster's *Faust*, 1883, p. 306.]

The choice of such remains—and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to Heaven,—"Vengeance is mine alone!"
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

Man. Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form
Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep Despair,
Which is Remorse without the fear of Hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of Heaven—can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense
Of its own sins—wrongs—sufferance—and revenge
Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemned
He deals on his own soul.

Abbot. All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is

And a worldly monk, and a pregnant nun,
Are things which every day appear.

MANFRED *alone.*

Man. Why would this fool break in on me, and force
My art to pranks fantastical?—no matter,
It was not of my seeking. My heart sickens,
And weighs a fixed foreboding on my soul.
But it is calm—calm as a sullen sea
After the hurricane; the winds are still,
But the cold waves swell high and heavily,
And there is danger in them. Such a rest
Is no repose. My life hath been a combat,
And every thought a wound, till I am scarred
In the immortal part of me.—What now?"]

1. [A supplementary MS. supplies the text for the remainder of the scene.]

The sense of its necessity. Say on—
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardoned.
Man. When Rome's sixth Emperor [1] was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death [i]
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have stanched
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said—
Some empire still in his expiring glance—
"It is too late—is this fidelity?"
Abbot. And what of this?
Man. I answer with the Roman—
"It is too late!"
Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with Heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.
Man. Aye—father! I have had those early visions,
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,) [2]
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.
Abbot. And wherefore so?

i. *To shun* { *not loss of life, but* / *the torments of a* } *public death.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [For the death of Nero, "Rome's sixth Emperor," *vide C. Suet. Trang.*, lib. vi. cap. xlix.]

2. [A reminiscence of the clouds of spray from the Fall of the Staubbach, which, in certain aspects, appear to be springing upwards from the bed of the waterfall.]

Man. I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway; and soothe, and sue,
And watch all time, and pry into all place,
And be a living Lie, who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean—and such
The mass are; I disdained to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation. Like the Wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,[1]
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly,—such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would——

Man. Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,[2]
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,—
Some of disease—and some insanity—
And some of withered, or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are numbered in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.

1. [Compare *The Giaour*, lines 282–284. Compare, too, *Don Juan*, Canto IV. stanza lvii. line 8.]

2. [Here, as in so many other passages of *Manfred*, Byron is recording his own feelings and forebodings. The same note is struck in the melancholy letters of the autumn of 1811. See, for example, the letter to Dallas, October 11, "It seems as though I were to experience in my youth the greatest misery of age," etc. (*Letters*, 1898, ii. 52).]

Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still——

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

Abbot. This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—Light and Darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts
Mixed, and contending without end or order,—
All dormant or destructive. He will perish—
And yet he must not—I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

MANFRED *and* HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?
I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*
Glorious Orb! the idol[1]

1. ["Pray, was Manfred's speech to *the Sun* still retained in Act third? I hope so: it was one of the best in the thing, and better than the Colosseum."—Letter to Murray, July 9, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 147. Compare Byron's early rendering of "Ossian's Address to the Sun 'in Carthon.'"—*Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 229.]

Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons [1]
Of the embrace of Angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring Spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious Orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was revealed!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladdened, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they poured [2]
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief Star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone—
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.

1. "And it came to pass, that the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair," etc.—"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."—*Genesis*, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

2. [For the "Chaldeans" and "mountain-tops," see *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xiv. line 1, and stanza xci. lines 1–3.]

SCENE III.—*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other dependants of* MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough! night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it,—
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.
Manuel. 'Twere dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.
Her. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is't?
Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.
Her. There be more sons in like predicament!
But wherein do they differ?
Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.
Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.
Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen

Some strange things in them, Herman.[1]
Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happened hereabouts, by this same tower.
Manuel. That was a night indeed! I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such
Another evening:—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle,[1] so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seemed to love,—
As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
The Lady Astarte, his——[2]
Hush! who comes here?

1. *Some strange things in these far years.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [The Grosse Eiger is a few miles to the south of the Castle of Unspunnen.]

2. [The remainder of the act in its original shape, ran thus—

"*Her.* Look—look—the tower—
The tower's on fire. Oh, heavens and earth! what sound,
What dreadful sound is that? [*A crash like thunder.*
Manuel. Help, help, there!—to the rescue of the Count,—
The Count's in danger,—what ho! there! approach!
[*The Servants, Vassals, and Peasantry approach stupified with terror.*
If there be any of you who have heart
And love of human kind, and will to aid
Those in distress—pause not—but follow me—
The portal's open, follow. [MANUEL *goes in.*
Her. Come—who follows?
What, none of ye?—ye recreants! shiver then
Without. I will not see old Manuel risk
His few remaining years unaided. [HERMAN *goes in.*
Vassal. Hark!—
No—all is silent—not a breath—the flame
Which shot forth such a blaze is also gone:
What may this mean? Let's enter!
Peasant. Faith, not I,—
Not but, if one, or two, or more, will join,
I then will stay behind; but, for my part,
I do not see precisely to what end.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?
Her. Yonder in the tower.
Abbot. I must speak with him.
Manuel. 'Tis impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.
Abbot. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.

Vassal. Cease your vain prating—come.
Manuel (*speaking within*). 'Tis all in vain—
He's dead.
Her. (*within*). Not so—even now methought he moved;
But it is dark—so bear him gently out—
Softly—how cold he is! take care of his temples
In winding down the staircase.

Re-enter MANUEL *and* HERMAN, *bearing* MANFRED *in their arms.*

Manuel. Hie to the castle, some of ye, and bring
What aid you can. Saddle the barb, and speed
For the leech to the city—quick! some water there!
Her. His cheek is black—but there is a faint beat
Still lingering about the heart. Some water.
[*They sprinkle* MANFRED *with water: after a pause, he gives some signs of life.*
Manuel. He seems to strive to speak—come—cheerly, Count!
He moves his lips—canst hear him? I am old,
And cannot catch faint sounds.
[HERMAN *inclining his head and listening.*
Her. I hear a word
Or two—but indistinctly—what is next?
What's to be done? let's bear him to the castle.
[MANFRED *motions with his hand not to remove him.*
Manuel. He disapproves—and 'twere of no avail—
He changes rapidly.
Her. 'Twill soon be over.
Manuel. Oh! what a death is this! that I should live
To shake my gray hairs over the last chief
Of the house of Sigismund.—And such a death!
Alone—we know not how—unshrived—untended—
With strange accompaniments and fearful signs—
I shudder at the sight—but must not leave him.
Manfred (*speaking faintly and slowly*). Old man! 'tis not so
difficult to die. [MANFRED, *having said this, expires.*
Her. His eyes are fixed and lifeless.—He is gone.—
Manuel. Close them.—My old hand quivers.—He departs—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone!
End of Act Third, and of the poem."]

Her. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.
Abbot. Herman! I command thee,[i]
Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.
Her. We dare not.
Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.
Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.
Abbot. Why so?
Manuel. But step this way,
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Interior of the Tower.*

MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the Night[1]
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learned the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,[2]
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar

i. *Sirrah! I command thee.*—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza lxxxvi. line 1; stanza lxxxix. lines 1, 2; and stanza xc. lines 1, 2.]

2. ["Drove at midnight to see the Coliseum by moonlight: but what can I say of the Coliseum? It must be *seen;* to describe it I should have thought impossible, if I had not read *Manfred*. . . . His [Byron's] description is the very thing itself; but what cannot he do on such a subject, when his pen is like the wand of Moses, whose touch can produce waters even from the barren rock?"—Matthews's *Diary of an Invalid*, 1820, pp. 158, 159. (Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanzas cxxviii.–cxxxi.).]

The watch-dog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,[1]
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.[2]
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appeared to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levelled battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling Moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not—till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the Great of old,—
The dead, but sceptred, Sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.
'Twas such a night!
'Tis strange that I recall it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good Lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanzas cvi.–cix.]
2. [For "begun," compare *Don Juan*, Canto II. stanza clxvii. line 1.]

May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wandered,
But is not yet all lost.
Man. Thou know'st me not;
My days are numbered, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!
Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace me?
Man. Not I!
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.
Abbot. What dost thou mean?
Man. Look there!
What dost thou see?
Abbot. Nothing.
Man. Look there, I say,
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest?
Abbot. That which should shake me,—but I fear it not:
I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds: he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.
Man. Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!
Abbot. And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this fiend:—
What doth he here?
Man. Why—aye—what doth he here?
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.
Abbot. Alas! lost Mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye [1]

1. [Compare—

". . . but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched."

Paradise Lost, i. 600.]

Glares forth the immortality of Hell—
Avaunt!—
Man. Pronounce—what is thy mission?
Spirit. Come!
Abbot. What art thou, unknown being? answer!—
speak!
Spirit. The genius of this mortal.—Come! 'tis time.
Man. I am prepared for all things, but deny
The Power which summons me. Who sent thee here?
Spirit. Thou'lt know anon—Come! come!
Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!
Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.
Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.
Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise![1]
[*Other Spirits rise up.*
Abbot. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I say,—
Ye have no power where Piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name—
Spirit. Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain: this man is forfeited.
Once more—I summon him—Away! Away!
Man. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.
Spirit. Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal? Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched?
Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest!

1. *Summons* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against Death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance, daring,
And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill
In knowledge of our Fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—
Spirit. But thy many crimes
Have made thee——
Man. What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punished but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The Mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time:[1] its innate sense,
When stripped of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorbed in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of Death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

Abbot. Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle: Give thy prayers to Heaven—

1. ["The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."
Paradise Lost, i. 254, 255.]

Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.
Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.
Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?
Man. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die.[1]
[MANFRED *expires.*
Abbot. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight;
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.[2]

1. [In the first edition (p. 75), this line was left out at Gifford's suggestion (*Memoirs, etc.*, 1891, i. 387). Byron was indignant, and wrote to Murray, August 12, 1817 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 157), "You have destroyed the whole effect and moral of the poem, by omitting the last line of Manfred's speaking."]

2. [For Goethe's translation of the following passages in *Manfred*, viz. (i.) Manfred's soliloquy, act i. sc. 1, line 1, *seq.*; (ii.) "The Incantation," act i. sc. 1, lines 192–261; (iii.) Manfred's soliloquy, act ii. sc. 2, lines 164–204; (iv.) the duologue between Manfred and Astarte, act ii. sc. 4, lines 116–155; (v.) a couplet, "For the night hath been to me," etc., act iii. sc. 4, lines 3, 4;—see Professor A. Brandl's *Goethe-Jahrbuch*, 1899, and Goethe's *Werke*, 1874, iii. 201, as quoted in Appendix II., *Letters*, 1901, v. 503–514.]

THE LAMENT OF TASSO.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE LAMENT OF TASSO.*

THE MS. of the *Lament of Tasso* is dated April 20, 1817. It was despatched from Florence April 23, and reached England May 12 (see *Memoir of John Murray*, 1891, i. 384). Proofs reached Byron June 7, and the poem was published July 17, 1817.

"It was," he writes (April 26), "written in consequence of my having been lately in Ferrara." Again, writing from Rome (May 5, 1817), he asks if the MS. has arrived, and adds, "I look upon it as a 'These be good rhymes,' as Pope's papa said to him when he was a boy" (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 112–115). Two months later he reverted to the theme of Tasso's ill-treatment at the hands of Duke Alfonso, in the memorable stanzas xxxv.–xxxix. of the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold* (*Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 354–359; and for examination of the circumstances of Tasso's imprisonment in the Hospital of Sant' Anna, *vide ibid.*, pp. 355, 356, *note* 1).

Notices of the *Lament of Tasso* appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, August, 1817, vol. 87, pp. 150, 151; in *The Scot's Magazine*, August, 1817, N.S., vol. i. pp. 48, 49; and a eulogistic but uncritical review in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, November, 1817, vol. ii. pp. 142–144.

ADVERTISEMENT.

At Ferrara, in the Library, are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme [1] and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto, and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house, of the latter. But, as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St. Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated: the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.[2]

1. [A MS. of the *Gerusalemme* is preserved and exhibited at Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields.]

2. [The original MS. of this poem is dated, "The Apennines, April 20, 1817."]

THE LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

Long years![1]—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of Song—
Long years of outrage—calumny—and wrong;
Imputed madness, prisoned solitude,[2]
And the Mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorred grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain,
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, Captivity displayed

1. [The MS. of the *Lament of Tasso* corresponds, save in three lines where alternate readings are superscribed, *verbatim et literatim* with the text. A letter dated August 21, 1817, from G. Polidori to John Murray, with reference to the translation of the *Lament* into Italian, and a dedicatory letter (in Polidori's handwriting) to the Earl of Guilford, dated August 3, 1817, form part of the same volume.]

2. [In a letter written to his friend Scipio Gonzaga ("Di prizione in Sant' Anna, questo mese di mezzio l'anno 1579"), Tasso exclaims, "Ah, wretched me! I had designed to write, besides two epic poems of most noble argument, four tragedies, of which I had formed the plan. I had schemed, too, many works in prose, on subjects the most lofty, and most useful to human life; I had designed to unite philosophy with eloquence, in such a manner that there might remain of me an eternal memory in the world. Alas! I had expected to close my life with glory and renown; but now, oppressed by the burden of so many calamities, I have lost every prospect of reputation and of honour. The fear of perpetual imprisonment increases my melancholy; the indignities which I suffer augment it; and the squalor of my beard, my hair, and habit, the sordidness and filth, exceedingly annoy me. Sure am I, that, if SHE who so little has corresponded to my attachment—if she saw me in such a state, and in such affliction—she would have some compassion on me."—*Lettere di Torquato Tasso*, 1853, ii. 60.]

Stands scoffing through the never-opened gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;
And revelled among men and things divine,
And poured my spirit over Palestine,[1]
In honour of the sacred war for Him,
The God who was on earth and is in Heaven,
For He has strengthened me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employed my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done:—[2]
My long-sustaining Friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,[3]
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But Thou, my young creation! my Soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,

1. [Compare—

"The second of a tenderer sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem."
Prophecy of Dante, Canto IV. lines 136, 137.]

2. [Tasso's imprisonment in the Hospital of Sant' Anna lasted from March, 1579, to July, 1586. The *Gerusalemme* had been finished many years before. He sent the first four cantos to his friend Scipio Gonzaga, February 17, and the last three on October 4, 1575 (*Lettere di Torquato Tasso*, 1852, i. 55–117). A mutilated first edition was published in 1580 by "Orazio *alias* Celio de' Malespini, avventuriere intrigante" (Solerti's *Vita, etc.*, 1895, i. 329).]

3. [So, too, Gibbon was overtaken by a "sober melancholy" when he had finished the last line of the last page of the *Decline and Fall* on the night of June 27, 1787.]

And wooed me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,
Nor cause for such: they called me mad—and why?
Oh Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?[1]
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind:
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful Love may sate itself away;
The wretchéd are the faithful; 't is their fate
To have all feeling, save the one, decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into Ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity.
And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'er-laboured mind,
And dim the little light that's left behind

1. [Not long after his imprisonment, Tasso appealed to the mercy of Alfonso, in a canzone of great beauty, . . . and . . . in another ode to the princesses, whose pity he invoked in the name of their own mother, who had herself known, if not the like horrors, the like solitude of imprisonment, and bitterness of soul, made a similar appeal. (See *Life of Tasso*, by John Black, 1810, ii. 64, 408.) Black prints the canzone in full; Solerti (*Vita, etc.*, i. 316-318) gives selections.]

With needless torture, as their tyrant Will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill: [1]
With these and with their victims am I classed,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have passed;
'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:
So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives—Oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot!—
Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast Lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;
While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,

1. ["For nearly the first year of his confinement Tasso endured all the horrors of a solitary sordid cell, and was under the care of a gaoler whose chief virtue, although he was a poet and a man of letters, was a cruel obedience to the commands of his prince. . . . His name was Agostino Mosti. . . . Tasso says of him, in a letter to his sister, 'ed usa meco ogni sorte di rigore ed inumanità.'"—Hobhouse, *Historical Illustrations, etc.*, 1818, pp. 20, 21, *note* 1.

Tasso, in a letter to Angelo Grillo, dated June 16, 1584 (Letter 288, *Le Lettere, etc.*, ii. 276), complains that Mosti did not interfere to prevent him being molested by the other inmates, disturbed in his studies, and treated disrespectfully by the governor's subordinates. In the letter to his sister Cornelia, from which Hobhouse quotes, the allusion is not to Mosti, but, according to Solerti, to the Cardinal Luigi d'Este. Elsewhere (Letter 133, *Lettere*, ii. 88, 89) Tasso describes Agostino Mosti as a rigorous and zealous Churchman, but far too cultivated and courteous a gentleman to have exercised any severity towards him *proprio motu*, or otherwise than in obedience to orders.]

Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our Stoical success?
No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardoned Princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, Sister of my Sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest:
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest;
Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquenched is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart,
As dwells the gathered lightning in its cloud,
Encompassed with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck,—forth flies the all-ethereal dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state—my station—and I knew
A Princess was no love-mate for a bard;[1]
I told it not—I breathed it not[2]—it was

1. [It is highly improbable that Tasso openly indulged, or secretly nourished, a consuming passion for Leonora d'Este, and it is certain that the "Sister of his Sovereign" had nothing to do with his being shut up in the Hospital of Sant' Anna. That poet and princess had known each other for over thirteen years, that the princess was seven years older than the poet, and, in March, 1579, close upon forty-two years of age, are points to be considered; but the fact that she died in February, 1581, and that Tasso remained in confinement for five years longer, is a stronger argument against the truth of the legend. She was a beautiful woman, his patroness and benefactress, and the theme of sonnets and canzoni; but it was not for her "sweet sake" that Tasso lost either his wits or his liberty.]

2. [Compare—

"I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name."

"Stanzas for Music," line 1, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 413.]

Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes revealed it, they, alas!
Were punished by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipped at holy distance, and around
Hallowed and meekly kissed the saintly ground;
Not for thou wert a Princess, but that Love
Had robed thee with a glory, and arrayed
Thy lineaments in beauty that dismayed—
Oh! not dismayed—but awed, like One above!
And in that sweet severity [1] there was
A something which all softness did surpass—
I know not how—thy Genius mastered mine—
My Star stood still before thee:—if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me—but for *thee*.
The very love which locked me to my chain
Hath lightened half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

VI.

It is no marvel—from my very birth
My soul was drunk with Love,—which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth:
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,

1. [Compare the following lines from the canzone entitled, "La Prima di Tre Sorelle Scritte a Madama Leonora d'Este . . . 1567:"—

"E certó il primo dì che'l bel sereno
Della tua fronte agli occhi miei s'offerse
E vidi armato spaziarvi Amore,
Se non che riverenza allor converse,
E Meraviglia in fredda selce il seno,
Ivi perfa con doppia morte il core;
Ma parte degli strali, e dell' ardore
Sentii pur anco entro 'l gelato marmo."]

And rocks, whereby they grew, a Paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dreamed uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the Wise
Shook their white agéd heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;[1]—
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Returned and wept alone, and dreamed again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day
I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
And then I lost my being, all to be
Absorbed in thine;—the world was past away;—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

1. [Ariosto (*Sat.* 7, Terz. 53) complains that his father chased him "not with spurs only, but with darts and lances, to turn over old texts," etc.; but Tasso was a studious and dutiful boy, and, though he finally deserted the law for poetry, and "crossed" his father's wishes and intentions, he took his own course reluctantly, and without any breach of decorum. But, perhaps, the following translations from the *Rinaldo*, which Black supplies in his footnotes (i. 41. 97), suggested this picture of a "poetic child" at variance with the authorities:—

"Now hasting thence a verdant mead he found,
Where flowers of fragrant smell adorned the ground;
Sweet was the scene, and here from human eyes
Apart he sits, and thus he speaks mid sighs."
Canto I. stanza xviii.

"Thus have I sung in youth's aspiring days
Rinaldo's pleasing plains and martial praise:
While other studies slowly I pursued
Ere twice revolved nine annual suns I viewed;
Ungrateful studies, whence oppressed I groaned,
A burden to myself and to the world unknown.
. . . . . .
But this first-fruit of new awakened powers!
Dear offspring of a few short studious hours!
Thou infant volume child of fancy born
Where Brenta's waves the sunny meads adorn."
Canto XII. stanza xc.]

VII.

I loved all Solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant;—had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave.[i]
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wrecked sailor on his desert shore;
The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.
What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye,
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky;
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,[1]
But with a sense of its decay: I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange Demon,[2] who is vexing me

i. *My mind like theirs adapted to its grave.*—[*MS.*]

1. ["Nor do I lament," wrote Tasso, shortly after his confinement, "that my heart is deluged with almost constant misery, that my head is always heavy and often painful, that my sight and hearing are much impaired, and that all my frame is become spare and meagre; but, passing all this with a short sigh, what I would bewail is the infirmity of my mind. . . . My mind sleeps, not thinks; my fancy is chill, and forms no pictures; my negligent senses will no longer furnish the images of things; my hand is sluggish in writing, and my pen seems as if it shrunk from the office. I feel as if I were chained in all my operations, and as if I were overcome by an unwonted numbness and oppressive stupor."—*Opere*, Venice, 1738, viii. 258, 263.]

2. [In a letter to Maurizio Cataneo, dated December 25, 1585, Tasso gives an account of his sprite (*folletto*): "The little thief has stolen from me many crowns. . . . He puts all my books topsy-turvy (*mi mette tutti i libri sottosopra*), opens my chest and steals my keys, so that I can keep nothing." Again, December 30, with regard to his hallucinations he says, "Know then that in addition to the wonders of the Folletto . . . I have many nocturnal alarms. For even when awake I have seemed to behold small flames in the air, and sometimes my eyes sparkle in such a manner, that I dread the loss of sight, and I have . . . seen sparks issue from them."—Letters 454, 456, *Le Lettere*, 1853, ii. 475, 479.]

With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to One, who long hath suffered so,
Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but Man,
But Spirits may be leagued with them—all Earth
Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
Of such defence the Powers of Evil can—
It may be—tempt me further,—and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved,
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?
Because I loved what not to love, and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—
My scars are callous, or I should have dashed
My brain against these bars, as the sun flashed
In mockery through them;—If I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words,—'t is that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp Madness deep into my memory,
And woo Compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.[1]
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,
A Poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,—
A Poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou, Leonora!—thou—who wert ashamed

1. *Which* { *nations yet* / *after days* } *shall visit for my sake.*—[*MS.*]

That such as I could love—who blushed to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed
By grief—years—weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me—
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,—
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this—shall be a consecrated spot!
But *Thou*—when all that Birth and Beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.[1]
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.[1]
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined [2] for ever—but too late![3]

1. *As none in life could* { *wrench* / *wring* } *thee from my heart.*—[*MS.*]

1. ["Tasso, notwithstanding the criticisms of the Cruscanti, would have been crowned in the Capitol, but for his death." Reply to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (Ravenna, March 15, 1820), *Letters*, 1900, iv. Appendix IX. p. 487.]

2. [Compare—

> "From Life's commencement to its slow decline
> We are entwined."
> *Epistle to Augusta*, stanza xvi. lines 6, 7, *vide ante*, p. 62.]

3. [The Apennines, April 20, 1817.]

BEPPO:

A VENETIAN STORY.

Rosalind. Farewell, Monsieur Traveller; Look, you lisp, and wear strange suits: disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your Nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think you have swam in a *Gondola.*

As You Like It, act iv. sc. 1, lines 33–35.

Annotation of the Commentators.

That is, *been at Venice*, which was much visited by the young English gentlemen of those times, and was *then* what *Paris* is *now*—the seat of all dissoluteness.—S. A.[1]

[The initials S. A. (Samuel Ayscough) are not attached to this note, but to another note on the same page (see *Dramatic Works* of William Shakspeare, 1807, i. 242).]

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1. ["Although I was in Italie only ix. days, I saw, in that little tyme, more liberty to sin than ever I heard tell of in our noble citie of London in ix. yeares."—*Schoolmaster*, bk. i. *ad fin.* By Roger Ascham.]

The Right Hon.ble J. Hookham-Frere

from a mezzotint by W. W. Barney

after a portrait by John Hoppner, R.A.

INTRODUCTION TO *BEPPO*.

BEPPO was written in the autumn (September 6—October 12, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 172) of 1817, whilst Byron was still engaged on the additional stanzas of the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold*. His new poem, as he admitted from the first, was "after the excellent manner" of John Hookham Frere's *jeu d'esprit*, known as *Whistlecraft* (*Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work* by William and Robert Whistlecraft, London, 1818[1]), which must have

1. ["I've often wish'd that I could write a book,
Such as all English people might peruse;
I never shall regret the pains it took,
That's just the sort of fame that I should choose:
To sail about the world like Captain Cook,
I'd sling a cot up for my favourite Muse,
And we'd take verses out to Demerara,
To New South Wales, and up to Niagara.

"Poets consume exciseable commodities,
They raise the nation's spirit when victorious,
They drive an export trade in whims and oddities,
Making our commerce and revenue glorious;
As an industrious and pains-taking body 'tis
That Poets should be reckoned meritorious:
And therefore I submissively propose
To erect one Board for Verse and one for Prose.

"Princes protecting Sciences and Art
I've often seen in copper-plate and print;
I never saw them elsewhere, for my part,
And therefore I conclude there's nothing in't:
But every body knows the Regent's heart;
I trust he won't reject a well-meant hint;
Each Board to have twelve members, with a seat
To bring them in per ann. five hundred neat:—

"From Princes I descend to the Nobility:
In former times all persons of high stations,
Lords, Baronets, and Persons of gentility,
Paid twenty guineas for the dedications;

reached him in the summer of 1817. Whether he divined the identity of "Whistlecraft" from the first, or whether his guess was an after-thought, he did not hesitate to take the water and shoot ahead of his unsuspecting rival. It was a case of plagiarism *in excelsis*, and the superiority of the imitation to the original must be set down to the genius of the plagiary, unaided by any profound study of Italian literature, or an acquaintance at first hand with the parents and inspirers of *Whistlecraft*.

It is possible that he had read and forgotten some specimens of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, which J. H. Merivale had printed in the *Monthly Magazine* for 1806–1807, vol. xxi. pp. 304, 510, etc., and it is certain that he was familiar with his *Orlando in Roncesvalles*, published in 1814. He distinctly states that he had not seen W. S. Rose's[1] translation of Casti's *Animali Parlanti* (first edition [anonymous], 1816), but, according to Pryse Gordon (*Personal Memoirs*, ii. 328), he had read the original. If we may trust Ugo Foscolo (see "Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians" in the *Quart. Rev.*, April, 1819, vol. xxi. pp. 486–526), there is some evidence that Byron had read Forteguerri's *Ricciardetto* (translated in 1819 by Sylvester (Douglas) Lord Glenbervie, and again, by John Herman Merivale, under the title of *The Two First Cantos of*

> This practice was attended with utility;
> The patrons lived to future generations,
> The poets lived by their industrious earning,—
> So men alive and dead could live by Learning.
>
> "Then twenty guineas was a little fortune;
> Now, we must starve unless the times should mend:
> Our poets now-a-days are deemed importune
> If their addresses are diffusely penned;
> Most fashionable authors make a short one
> To their own wife, or child, or private friend,
> To show their independence, I suppose;
> And that may do for Gentlemen like those.
>
> "Lastly, the common people I beseech—
> Dear People! if you think my verses clever,
> Preserve with care your noble parts of speech,
> And take it as a maxim to endeavour
> To talk as your good mothers used to teach,
> And then these lines of mine may last for ever;
> And don't confound the language of the nation
> With long-tailed words in *osity* and *ation*."
>
> Canto I. stanzas i.–vi.]

1. [For some admirable stanzas in the metre and style of *Beppo*, by W. S. Rose, who passed the winter of 1817–18 in Venice, and who

Richardetto, 1820), but the parallel which he adduces (*vide post*, p. 166) is not very striking or convincing.

On the other hand, after the poem was completed (March 25, 1818), he was under the impression that "Berni was the original of *all* . . . the father of that kind [*i.e.* the mock-heroic] of writing;" but there is nothing to show whether he had or had not read the *rifacimento* of Orlando's *Innamorato*, or the more distinctively Bernesque *Capitoli*. Two years later (see Letter to Murray, February 21, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 407; and "Advertisement" to *Morgante Maggiore*) he had discovered that "Pulci was the parent of *Whistlecraft*, and the precursor and model of Berni," but, in 1817, he was only at the commencement of his studies. A time came long before the "year or two" of his promise (March 25, 1818) when he had learned to simulate the *vera imago* of the Italian Muse, and was able not only to surpass his "immediate model," but to rival his model's forerunners and inspirers. In the meanwhile a tale based on a "Venetian anecdote" (perhaps an "episode" in the history of Colonel Fitzgerald and the Marchesa Castiglione,—see Letter to Moore, December 26, 1816, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 26) lent itself to "the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft," and would show "the knowing ones," that is, Murray's advisers, Gifford, Croker, Frere, etc., that "he could write cheerfully," and "would repel the charge of monotony and mannerism."

Eckermann, mindful of Goethe's hint that Byron had too much *empeiria* (an excess of *mondanité*—a *this*-worldliness), found it hard to read *Beppo* after *Macbeth*. "I felt," he says, "the predominance of a nefarious, empirical world, with which the mind which introduced it to us has in a certain measure associated itself" (*Conversations of Goethe, etc.*, 1874, p. 175). But *Beppo* must be taken at its own valuation. It is *A Venetian Story*, and the action takes place behind the scenes of "a comedy of Goldoni." A less subtle but a more apposite criticism may be borrowed from "Lord Byron's Combolio" (*sic*), *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1822, xi. 162–165.

> "The story that's in it
> May be told in a minute;
> But *par parenthèse* chatting,
> On this thing and that thing,
> Keeps the shuttlecock flying,
> And attention from dying."

Beppo, a Venetian Story (xcv. stanzas) was published

sent them to Byron from Albaro in the spring of 1818, see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 211–214, *note* 1.]

February 28, 1818; and a fifth edition, consisting of xcix. stanzas, was issued May 4, 1818.

Jeffrey, writing in the *Edinburgh Review* (February, 1818, vol. xxix. pp. 302–310), is unconcerned with regard to *Whistlecraft*, or any earlier model, but observes "that the nearest approach to it [*Beppo*] is to be found in some of the tales and lighter pieces of Prior—a few stanzas here and there among the trash and burlesque of Peter Pindar, and in several passages of Mr. Moore, and the author of the facetious miscellany entitled the *Twopenny Post Bag*."

Other notices, of a less appreciative kind, appeared in the *Monthly Review*, March, 1818, vol. 85, pp. 285–290; and in the *Eclectic Review*, N.S., June, 1818, vol. ix. pp. 555–557.

BEPPO.[1]

I.

'Tis known, at least it should be, that throughout
All countries of the Catholic persuasion,[2]
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes about,
The People take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, ere they grow devout,
However high their rank, or low their station,
With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masquing,
And other things which may be had for asking.

II.

The moment night with dusky mantle covers
The skies (and the more duskily the better),
The Time less liked by husbands than by lovers
Begins, and Prudery flings aside her fetter;
And Gaiety on restless tiptoe hovers,
Giggling with all the gallants who beset her;
And there are songs and quavers, roaring, humming,
Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.[3]

1. [The MS. of *Beppo*, in Byron's handwriting, is now in the possession of Captain the Hon. F. L. King Noel. It is dated October 10, 1817.]

2. [The use of "persuasion" as a synonime for "religion," is, perhaps, of American descent. Thomas Jefferson, in his first inaugural address as President of U.S.A., speaks "of whatever state or persuasion, political or religious." At the beginning of the nineteenth century theological niceties were not regarded, and the great gulph between a religion and a sect or party was imperfectly discerned. Hence the solecism.]

3. [Compare the lines which Byron enclosed in a letter to Moore, dated December 24, 1816 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 30)—

III.

And there are dresses splendid, but fantastical,
Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews,
And harlequins and clowns, with feats gymnastical,
Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and Hindoos;
All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,
All people, as their fancies hit, may choose,
But no one in these parts may quiz the Clergy,—
Therefore take heed, ye Freethinkers! I charge ye.

IV.

You'd better walk about begirt with briars,
Instead of coat and smallclothes, than put on
A single stitch reflecting upon friars,
Although you swore it only was in fun;
They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the fires
Of Phlegethon with every mother's son,
Nor say one mass to cool the cauldron's bubble
That boiled your bones, unless you paid them double.

V.

But saving this, you may put on whate'er
You like by way of doublet, cape, or cloak,
Such as in Monmouth-street, or in Rag Fair,
Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;
And even in Italy such places are,
With prettier name in softer accents spoke,
For, bating Covent Garden, I can hit on
No place that's called "Piazza" in Great Britain.[1]

"But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore,
. . . . . .
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore."]

1. [Monmouth Street, now absorbed in Shaftesbury Avenue (west side), was noted throughout the eighteenth century for the sale of second-hand clothes. Compare—

"Thames Street gives cheeses, Covent Garden fruits,
Moorfields old books, and Monmouth Street old suits."
Gay's *Trivia*, ii. 547, 548.

VI.

This feast is named the Carnival, which being
Interpreted, implies "farewell to flesh:"
So called, because the name and thing agreeing,
Through Lent they live on fish both salt and fresh.
But why they usher Lent with so much glee in,
Is more than I can tell, although I guess
'Tis as we take a glass with friends at parting,
In the Stage-Coach or Packet, just at starting.

VII.

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,
And solid meats, and highly spiced ragouts,
To live for forty days on ill-dressed fishes,
Because they have no sauces to their stews;
A thing which causes many "poohs" and "pishes,"
And several oaths (which would not suit the Muse),
From travellers accustomed from a boy
To eat their salmon, at the least, with soy;

VIII.

And therefore humbly I would recommend
"The curious in fish-sauce," before they cross
The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,
Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross
(Or if set out beforehand, these may send
By any means least liable to loss),
Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey,
Or, by the Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve ye;

IX.

That is to say, if your religion's Roman,
And you at Rome would do as Romans do,

Rag Fair or Rosemary Lane, now Royal Mint Street, was the Monmouth Street of the City. Compare—

"Where wave the tattered ensigns of Rag Fair."
Pope's *Dunciad*, i. 29, *var.*

The Arcade, or "Piazza," so called, which was built by Inigo Jones in 1652, ran along the whole of the north and east sides of the *Piazza* or Square of Covent Garden. The Arcade on the north side is still described as the "Piazzas."—*London Past and Present*, by H. B. Wheatley, 1891, i. 461, ii. 554, iii. 145.]

According to the proverb,—although no man,
If foreign, is obliged to fast; and you,
If Protestant, or sickly, or a woman,
Would rather dine in sin on a ragout—
Dine and be d—d! I don't mean to be coarse,
But that's the penalty, to say no worse.

X.

Of all the places where the Carnival
Was most facetious in the days of yore,
For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
And Masque, and Mime, and Mystery, and more
Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
Venice the bell from every city bore,—
And at the moment when I fix my story,
That sea-born city was in all her glory.

XI.

They've pretty faces yet, those same Venetians,
Black eyes, arched brows, and sweet expressions still;
Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,
In ancient arts by moderns mimicked ill;
And like so many Venuses of Titian's[1]
(The best's at Florence—see it, if ye will,)
They look when leaning over the balcony,
Or stepped from out a picture by Giorgione,[2]

XII.

Whose tints are Truth and Beauty at their best;
And when you to Manfrini's palace go,[3]

1. ["At Florence I remained but a day. . . . What struck me most was . . . the mistress of Titian, a portrait; a Venus of Titian in the Medici Gallery . . ."—Letter to Murray, April 27, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 113. Compare, too, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xlix. line 1, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 365, *note* 2.]

2. ["I know nothing of pictures myself, and care almost as little: but to me there are none like the Venetian—above all, Giorgione. I remember well his Judgment of Solomon in the Mareschalchi Gallery [in the Via Delle Asse, formerly celebrated for its pictures] in Bologna."—Letter to William Bankes, February 26, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 411.]

3. ["I also went over the Manfrini Palace, famous for its pictures. Among them, there is a portrait of Ariosto by Titian [now in the

That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;
It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,
And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'Tis but a portrait of his Son, and Wife,
And self; but *such* a Woman! Love in life![1]

XIII.

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,
No, nor ideal beauty, that fine name,
But something better still, so very real,
That the sweet Model must have been the same;
A thing that you would purchase, beg, or steal,
Wer't not impossible, besides a shame:
The face recalls some face, as 'twere with pain,
You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

XIV.

One of those forms which flit by us, when we
Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;
And, oh! the Loveliness at times we see
In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
The Youth, the Bloom, the Beauty which agree,
In many a nameless being we retrace,

possession of the Earl of Rosebery], surpassing all my anticipations of the power of painting or human expression: it is the poetry of portrait, and the portrait of poetry. There was also one of some learned lady, centuries old, whose name I forget, but whose features must always be remembered. I never saw greater beauty, or sweetness, or wisdom:—it is the kind of face to go mad for, because it cannot walk out of its frame. . . . What struck me most in the general collection was the extreme resemblance of the style of the female faces in the mass of pictures, so many centuries or generations old, to those you see and meet every day amongst the existing Italians. The Queen of Cyprus and Giorgione's wife, particularly the latter, are Venetians as it were of yesterday; the same eyes and expression, and, to my mind, there is none finer."—Letter to Murray, April 14, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 105. The picture which caught Byron's fancy was the so-called *Famiglia di Giorgione*, which was removed from the Manfrini Palace in 1856, and is now in the Palazzo Giovanelli. It represents "an almost nude woman, probably a gipsy, seated with a child in her lap, and a standing warrior gazing upon her, a storm breaking over the landscape."—*Handbook of Painting*, by Austen H. Layard, 1891, part ii. p. 553.]

1. [According to Vasari and others, Giorgione (Giorgio Barbarelli, b. 1478) was never married. He died of the plague, A.D. 1511.]

Whose course and home we knew not, nor shall know.
Like the lost Pleiad [1] seen no more below.

XV.

I said that like a picture by Giorgione
Venetian women were, and so they *are*,
Particularly seen from a balcony,
(For beauty's sometimes best set off afar)
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,[2]
They peep from out the blind, or o'er the bar;
And truth to say, they're mostly very pretty,
And rather like to show it, more's the pity!

XVI.

For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs,
Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a letter,
Which flies on wings of light-heeled Mercuries,
Who do such things because they know no better;
And then, God knows what mischief may arise,
When Love links two young people in one fetter,
Vile assignations, and adulterous beds,
Elopements, broken vows, and hearts, and heads.

XVII.

Shakspeare described the sex in Desdemona
As very fair, but yet suspect in fame,[3]
And to this day from Venice to Verona
Such matters may be probably the same,
Except that since those times was never known a
Husband whom mere suspicion could inflame

1. "Quæ septem dici, sex tamen esse solent."—Ovid., [*Fastorum*, lib. iv. line 170.]

2. [Carlo Goldoni (1707–1793). His play, *Belisarius*, was first performed November 24, 1734; *Le Bourru Bienfaisant*, November 4, 1771. *La Bottega del Caffé*, *La Locandiera*, *etc.*, still hold the stage. His *Mémoires* were published in 1787.]

3. ["Look to't:
. . . . . .
In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands; their best conscience
Is not to leave 't undone, but keep 't unknown."
Othello, act iii. sc. 3, lines 206–208.]

To suffocate a wife no more than twenty,
Because she had a "Cavalier Servente." [1]

XVIII.

Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)
Is of a fair complexion altogether,
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's,
Which smothers women in a bed of feather,
But worthier of these much more jolly fellows,
When weary of the matrimonial tether
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,
But takes at once another, or *another's*.

XIX.

Didst ever see a Gondola? For fear
You should not, I'll describe it you exactly:
'Tis a long covered boat that's common here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly, but compactly,
Rowed by two rowers, each call'd "Gondolier,"
It glides along the water looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapt in a canoe,
Where none can make out what you say or do.

XX.

And up and down the long canals they go,
And under the Rialto [2] shoot along,

1. [Compare—

"An English lady asked of an Italian,
What were the actual and official duties
Of the strange thing, some women set a value on,
Which hovers oft about some married beauties,
Called 'Cavalier Servente,' a Pygmalion
Whose statues warm (I fear, alas! too true 't is)
Beneath his art. The dame, pressed to disclose them,
Said—'Lady, I beseech you to *suppose them*.'"
Don Juan, Canto IX. stanza li.

A critic, in the *Monthly Review* (March, 1818, vol. lxxxv. p. 286), took Byron to task for omitting the *e* in *Cavaliere*. In a letter to Murray, April 17, 1818, he shows that he is right, and takes his revenge on the editor (George Edward) Griffiths, and his "scribbler Mr. Hodgson."—*Letters*, 1900, iv. 226.]

2. ["An English abbreviation. Rialto is the name, not of the bridge, but of the island from which it is called; and the Venetians say, *Il*

By night and day, all paces, swift or slow,
And round the theatres, a sable throng,
They wait in their dusk livery of woe,—
But not to them do woeful things belong,
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,
Like mourning coaches when the funeral's done.

XXI.

But to my story.—'Twas some years ago,
It may be thirty, forty, more or less,
The Carnival was at its height, and so
Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;
A certain lady went to see the show,
Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

XXII.

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years
Which certain people call a "*certain age*," [1]
Which yet the most uncertain age appears,
Because I never heard, nor could engage

ponte di Rialto, as we say Westminster Bridge. In that island is the Exchange; and I have often walked there as on classic ground. . . . 'I Sopportichi,' says Sansovino, writing in 1580 [*Venetia*, 1581, p. 134], 'sono ogni giorno frequentati da i mercatanti Fiorentini, Genovesi, Milanesi, Spagnuoli, Turchi, e d'altre nationi diverse del mondo, i quali vi concorrono in tanta copia, che questa piazza è annoverata fra le prime dell' universo.' It was there that the Christian held discourse with the Jew; and Shylock refers to it when he says—

"'Signor Antonio, many a time and oft,
In the Rialto you have rated me.'

'Andiamo a Rialto,'—'L'ora di Rialto,' were on every tongue; and continue so to the present day, as we learn from the Comedies of Goldoni, and particularly from his *Mercanti*."—Note to the *Brides of Venice, Poems*, by Samuel Rogers, 1852, ii. 88, 89. See, too, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza iv. line 6, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 331.]

1. [Compare "At the epoch called a certain age she found herself an old maid."—Jane Porter, *Thaddeus of Warsaw* (1803), cap. xxxviii. (See *N. Eng. Dict.*, art. "Certain.")

Ugo Foscolo, in his article in the *Quarterly Review*, April, 1819, vol. xxi. pp. 486–556, quotes these lines in illustration of a stanza from Forteguerri's *Ricciardetto*, iv. 2—

"Quando si giugne ad una certa età,
Ch'io non voglio descrivervi qual è," etc.]

A person yet by prayers, or bribes, or tears,
To name, define by speech, or write on page,
The period meant precisely by that word,—
Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

XXIII.

Laura was blooming still, had made the best
Of Time, and Time returned the compliment,
And treated her genteelly, so that, dressed,
She looked extremely well where'er she went;
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent;
Indeed, she shone all smiles, and seemed to flatter
Mankind with her black eyes for looking at her.

XXIV.

She was a married woman; 'tis convenient,
Because in Christian countries 'tis a rule
To view their little slips with eyes more lenient;
Whereas if single ladies play the fool,
(Unless within the period intervenient
A well-timed wedding makes the scandal cool)
I don't know how they ever can get over it,
Except they manage never to discover it.

XXV.

Her husband sailed upon the Adriatic,
And made some voyages, too, in other seas,
And when he lay in Quarantine for pratique [1]
(A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease),
His wife would mount, at times, her highest attic,
For thence she could discern the ship with ease:
He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,
His name Giuseppe, called more briefly, Beppo.[2]

XXVI.

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,
Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure;

1. [A clean bill of health after quarantine. Howell spells the word "pratic," and Milton "pratticke."]
2. Beppo is the "Joe" of the Italian Joseph.

Though coloured, as it were, within a tanyard,
He was a person both of sense and vigour—
A better seaman never yet did man yard;
And she, although her manners showed no rigour,
Was deemed a woman of the strictest principle,
So much as to be thought almost invincible.[1]

XXVII.

But several years elapsed since they had met;
Some people thought the ship was lost, and some
That he had somehow blundered into debt,
And did not like the thought of steering home;
And there were several offered any bet,
Or that he would, or that he would not come;
For most men (till by losing rendered sager)
Will back their own opinions with a wager.

XXVIII.

'Tis said that their last parting was pathetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
And their presentiment was quite prophetic,
That they should never more each other see,
(A sort of morbid feeling, half poetic,
Which I have known occur in two or three,)
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad knee
He left this Adriatic Ariadne.

XXIX.

And Laura waited long, and wept a little,
And thought of wearing weeds, as well she might;
She almost lost all appetite for victual,
And could not sleep with ease alone at night;

1. ["The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges' time; a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover; those who have two, three, or more, are a little wild; but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connection . . . who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. . . . There is no convincing a woman here, that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right, or the fitness of things, in having an *Amoroso*."—Letter to Murray, January 2, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 40, 41.]

She deemed the window-frames and shutters brittle
Against a daring housebreaker or sprite,
And so she thought it prudent to connect her
With a vice-husband, *chiefly* to *protect her.*

XXX.

She chose, (and what is there they will not choose,
If only you will but oppose their choice?)
Till Beppo should return from his long cruise,
And bid once more her faithful heart rejoice,
A man some women like, and yet abuse—
A Coxcomb was he by the public voice;
A Count of wealth, they said, as well as quality,
And in his pleasures of great liberality.[1]

XXXI.

And then he was a Count, and then he knew
Music, and dancing, fiddling, French and Tuscan;
The last not easy, be it known to you,
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.
He was a critic upon operas, too,
And knew all niceties of sock and buskin;
And no Venetian audience could endure a
Song, scene, or air, when he cried "seccatura!"[1]

XXXII.

His "bravo" was decisive, for that sound
Hushed "Academie" sighed in silent awe;
The fiddlers trembled as he looked around,
For fear of some false note's detected flaw;
The "Prima Donna's" tuneful heart would bound,
Dreading the deep damnation of his "Bah!"
Soprano, Basso, even the Contra-Alto,
Wished him five fathom under the Rialto.

i. *A Count of wealth inferior to his quality,*
Which somewhat limited his liberality.—[*MS.*]

1. ["Some of the Italians liked him [a famous improvisatore], others called his performance '*seccatura*' (a devilish good word, by the way), and all Milan was in controversy about him."—Letter to Moore, November 6, 1816, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 384.]

XXXIII.

He patronised the Improvisatori,
Nay, could himself extemporise some stanzas,
Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a story,
Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance as
Italians can be, though in this their glory
Must surely yield the palm to that which France has;
In short, he was a perfect Cavaliero,
And to his very valet seemed a hero.[1]

XXXIV.

Then he was faithful too, as well as amorous;
So that no sort of female could complain,
Although they're now and then a little clamorous,
He never put the pretty souls in pain;
His heart was one of those which most enamour us,
Wax to receive, and marble to retain:
He was a lover of the good old school,
Who still become more constant as they cool.

XXXV.

No wonder such accomplishments should turn
A female head, however sage and steady—
With scarce a hope that Beppo could return,
In law he was almost as good as dead, he
Nor sent, nor wrote, nor showed the least concern,
And she had waited several years already:
And really if a man won't let us know
That he's alive, he's *dead*—or should be so.

XXXVI.

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman,
(Although, God knows, it is a grievous sin,)
'Tis, I may say, permitted to have *two* men;
I can't tell who first brought the custom in,

1. [The saying, "Il n'y a point de héros pour son valet de chambre," is attributed to Maréchal (Nicholas) Catinat (1637–1712). His biographer speaks of presenting "*le héros en déshabillé*." (See his *Mémoires*, 1819, ii. 118.)]

But " Cavalier Serventes " are quite common,
And no one notices or cares a pin;
And we may call this (not to say the worst)
A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first.*

XXXVII.

The word was formerly a " Cicisbeo," [1]
But *that* is now grown vulgar and indecent;
The Spaniards call the person a " *Cortejo*," [2]
For the same mode subsists in Spain, though recent;
In short it reaches from the Po to Teio,
And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea sent:
But Heaven preserve Old England from such courses!
Or what becomes of damage and divorces?

XXXVIII.[3]

However, I still think, with all due deference
To the fair *single* part of the creation,
That married ladies should preserve the preference
In *tête à tête* or general conversation—
And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other nation—
Because they know the world, and are at ease,
And being natural, naturally please.

XXXIX.

'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy and awkward at first coming out,
So much alarmed, that she is quite alarming,
All Giggle, Blush; half Pertness, and half Pout;
And glancing at *Mamma*, for fear there's harm in
What you, she, it, or they, may be about:

1. [The origin of the word is obscure. According to the *Vocab. della Crusca*, " cicisbeo " is an inversion of " bel cece," beautiful chick (pea). Pasqualino, cited by Diez, says it is derived from the French *chiche beau.—N. Eng. Dict.*, art. " Cicisbeo."]

2. Cortejo is pronounced Corte*h*o, with an aspirate, according to the Arabesque guttural. It means what there is as yet no precise name for in England, though the practice is as common as in any tramontane country whatever.

3. [Stanzas xxxviii., xxxix., are not in the original MS.]

The Nursery still lisps out in all they utter—
Besides, they always smell of bread and butter.[1]

XL.

But "Cavalier Servente" is the phrase
Used in politest circles to express
This supernumerary slave, who stays
Close to the lady as a part of dress,
Her word the only law which he obeys.
His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call,
And carries fan and tippet, gloves and shawl.

XLI.

With all its sinful doings, I must say,
That Italy's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the Sun shine every day,
And vines (not nailed to walls) from tree to tree
Festooned, much like the back scene of a play,
Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the South of France.

XLII.

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,
Without being forced to bid my groom be sure
My cloak is round his middle strapped about,
Because the skies are not the most secure;
I know too that, if stopped upon my route,
Where the green alleys windingly allure,
Reeling with *grapes* red wagons choke the way,—
In England 'twould be dung, dust, or a dray.

XLIII.

I also like to dine on becaficas,
To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,

1. [For the association of bread and butter with immaturity, compare, "Ye bread-and-butter rogues, do ye run from me?" (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*, act iii. sc. 7). (See *N. Eng. Dict.*, art. "Bread.")]

Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
But with all Heaven t'himself; the day will break as
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky cauldron simmers.

XLIV.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,[1]
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,[2]
With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

XLV.

I like the women too (forgive my folly !),
From the rich peasant cheek of ruddy bronze,[i.]
And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,
To the high Dama's brow, more melancholy,
But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.[ii.]

XLVI.

Eve of the land which still is Paradise !
Italian Beauty didst thou not inspire

i. *From the tall peasant with her ruddy bronze.*—[*MS.*]
ii. *Like her own clime, all sun, and bloom, and skies.*—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare—

". . . the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech?"

Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza lviii. lines 4–6,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 374, *note* 1.]

2. *Sattin*, eh? Query, I can't spell it.—[*MS.*]

Raphael,[1] who died in thy embrace, and vies
With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,
In what he hath bequeathed us?—in what guise
Though flashing from the fervour of the Lyre,
Would *words* describe thy past and present glow,
While yet Canova[2] can create below?[3]

XLVII.

"England! with all thy faults I love thee still,"[4]
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;
I like the government (but that is not it);
I like the freedom of the press and quill;
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it);

1. [For the received accounts of the cause of Raphael's death, see his Lives. "Fidem matrimonii quidem dederat nepti cuidam Cardinal. Bibiani, sed partim Cardinalatûs spe lactatus partim pro seculi loci-que more, Romæ enim plerumque vixit, vagis amoribus delectatus, morbo hinc contracto, obiit A.C. 1520, ætat. 37."—Art. "Raphael," *apud* Hofmann, *Lexicon Universale*. It would seem that Raphael was betrothed to Maria, daughter of Antonio Divizio da Bibiena, the nephew of Cardinal Bibiena (see his letter to his uncle Simone di Battista di Ciarla da Urbino, dated July 1, 1514), and it is a fact that a girl named Margarita, supposed to be his mistress, is mentioned in his will. But the "causes of his death," April 6, 1520, were a delicate constitution, overwork, and a malarial fever, caught during his researches among the ruins of ancient Rome" (*Raphael of Urbino*, by J. D. Passavant, 1872, pp. 140, 196, 197. See, too, *Raphael*, by E. Muntz, 1888).]

2. [Compare the lines enclosed in a letter to Murray, dated November 25, 1816—

"In this belovéd marble view,
Above the works and thoughts of man,
What Nature *could* but *would not* do,
And Beauty and Canova can."]

3. ["(In talking thus, the writer, more especially
Of women, would be understood to say,
He speaks as a Spectator, not officially,
And always, Reader, in a modest way;
Perhaps, too, in no very great degree shall he
Appear to have offended in this lay,
Since, as all know, without the Sex, our Sonnets
Would seem unfinished, like their untrimmed bonnets.)
"(Signed) PRINTER'S DEVIL."]

4. [*The Task*, by William Cowper, ii. 206. Compare *The Farewell*, line 27, by Charles Churchill—

"Be England what she will,
With all her faults, she is my Country still."]

I like a Parliamentary debate,
Particularly when 'tis not too late;

XLVIII.

I like the taxes, when they're not too many;
I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear;
I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any;
Have no objection to a pot of beer;
I like the weather,—when it is not rainy,
That is, I like two months of every year.
And so God save the Regent, Church, and King!
Which means that I like all and every thing.

XLIX.

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's debt,
Our little riots just to show we're free men,
Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,
Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
All these I can forgive, and those forget,
And greatly venerate our recent glories,
And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

L.

But to my tale of Laura,—for I find
Digression is a sin, that by degrees
Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
And, therefore, may the reader too displease—
The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
And caring little for the Author's ease,
Insist on knowing what he means—a hard
And hapless situation for a Bard.

LI.

Oh! that I had the art of easy writing
What should be easy reading! could I scale
Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
Those pretty poems never known to fail,
How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
A Grecian, Syrian,[1] or *Ass*yrian tale;

1. [The allusion is to Gally Knight's *Ilderim*, a Syrian Tale. See, too

And sell you, mixed with western Sentimentalism,
Some samples of the *finest Orientalism.*

LII.

But I am but a nameless sort of person,
(A broken Dandy[1] lately on my travels)
And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,
And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;
I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
But verse is more in fashion—so here goes!

LIII.

The Count and Laura made their new arrangement,
Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes do,
For half a dozen years without estrangement;
They had their little differences, too;
Those jealous whiffs, which never any change meant;
In such affairs there probably are few

Letter to Moore, March 25, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 78: "Talking of tail, I wish you had not called it [*Lalla Rookh*] a '*Persian Tale.*' Say a 'Poem,' or 'Romance,' but not 'Tale.' I am very sorry that I called some of my own things 'Tales.' . . . Besides, we have had Arabian, and Hindoo, and Turkish, and Assyrian Tales." *Beppo*, it must be remembered, was published anonymously, and in the concluding lines of the stanza the satire is probably directed against his own "Tales."]

1. ["The expressions '*blue-stocking*' and '*dandy*' may furnish matter for the learning of a commentator at some future period. At this moment every English reader will understand them. Our present ephemeral dandy is akin to the maccaroni of my earlier days. The first of these expressions has become classical, by Mrs. Hannah More's poem of '*Bas-Bleu*,' and the other by the use of it in one of Lord Byron's poems. Though now become familiar and rather trite, their day may not be long.

'. . . Cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula.'"

—Translation of Forteguerri's *Ricciardetto*, by Lord Glenbervie, 1822 (*note* to stanza v.).

Compare, too, a memorandum of 1820. "I liked the Dandies; they were always very civil to *me*, though in general they disliked literary people. . . . The truth is, that, though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of Dandyism in my minority, and probably retained enough of it to conciliate the great ones at four-and-twenty."—*Letters*, 1901, v. 423.]

Who have not had this pouting sort of squabble,
From sinners of high station to the rabble.

LIV.

But, on the whole, they were a happy pair,
As happy as unlawful love could make them;
The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,
Their chains so slight, 'twas not worth while to break them:
The World beheld them with indulgent air;
The pious only wished "the Devil take them!"
He took them not; he very often waits,
And leaves old sinners to be young ones' baits.

LV.

But they were young: Oh! what without our Youth
Would Love be! What would Youth be without Love!
Youth lends its joy, and sweetness, vigour, truth,
Heart, soul, and all that seems as from above;
But, languishing with years, it grows uncouth—
One of few things Experience don't improve;
Which is, perhaps, the reason why old fellows
Are always so preposterously jealous.

LVI.

It was the Carnival, as I have said
Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so
Laura the usual preparations made,
Which you do when your mind's made up to go
To-night to Mrs. Boehm's masquerade,[1]
Spectator, or Partaker in the show;
The only difference known between the cases
Is—*here*, we have six weeks of "varnished faces."

1. [The *Morning Chronicle* of June 17, 1817, reports at length "MRS. BOEHM'S GRAND MASQUERADE." "On Monday evening this distinguished lady of the *haut ton* gave a splendid masquerade at her residence in St. James's Square." "The Dukes of Gloucester, Wellington, etc., were present in plain dress. Among the dominoes were the Duke and Duchess of Grafton, etc." Lady Caroline Lamb was among the guests. See, too, *Memoir of C. M. Young*, 1871, i. 212-216.]

LVII.

Laura, when dressed, was (as I sang before)
A pretty woman as was ever seen,
Fresh as the Angel o'er a new inn door,
Or frontispiece of a new Magazine,[1]
With all the fashions which the last month wore,
Coloured, and silver paper leaved between
That and the title-page, for fear the Press
Should soil with parts of speech the parts of dress.

LVIII.

They went to the Ridotto;[2] 'tis a hall
Where People dance, and sup, and dance again;
Its proper name, perhaps, were a masqued ball,
But that's of no importance to my strain;
'Tis (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall,
Excepting that it can't be spoilt by rain;
The company is "mixed" (the phrase I quote is
As much as saying, they're below your notice);

LIX.

For a "mixed company" implies that, save
Yourself and friends, and half a hundred more,
Whom you may bow to without looking grave,
The rest are but a vulgar set, the Bore
Of public places, where they basely brave
The fashionable stare of twenty score
Of well-bred persons, called "*The World;*" but I,
Although I know them, really don't know why.

LX.

This is the case in England; at least was
During the dynasty of Dandies, now

1. [The reference is, probably, to the *Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions, and Politics* (1809–1829), which was illustrated by coloured plates of dresses, "artistic" furniture, Gothic cottages, park lodges, etc.]

2. [For "Ridotto," see Letter to Moore, January 28, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 49, *note* 1.]

Perchance succeeded by some other class
Of imitated Imitators:—how[i]
Irreparably soon decline, alas!
The Demagogues of fashion: all below
Is frail; how easily the world is lost
By Love, or War, and, now and then,—by Frost!

LXI.

Crushed was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
Who knocked his army down with icy hammer,
Stopped by the *Elements*[1]—like a Whaler—or
A blundering novice in his new French grammar;
Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,
And as for Fortune—but I dare not d—n her,
Because, were I to ponder to Infinity,
The more I should believe in her Divinity.[2]

LXII.

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,
She gives us luck in lotteries, love, and marriage;
I cannot say that she's done much for me yet;
Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,
We've not yet closed accounts, and we shall see yet
How much she'll make amends for past miscarriage;
Meantime the Goddess I'll no more importune,
Unless to thank her when she's made my fortune.

i. *Of Imited* (*sic*) *Imitations, how soon I how.*—[*MS.*]

1. ["When Brummell was obliged . . . to retire to France, he knew no French; and having obtained a Grammar for the purposes of study, our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress Brummell had made in French . . . he responded, 'that Brummell had been stopped, like Buonaparte in Russia, by the *Elements*.' I have put this pun into *Beppo*, which is 'a fair exchange and no robbery;' for Scrope made his fortune at several dinners (as he owned himself), by repeating occasionally, as his own, some of the buffooneries with which I had encountered him in the Morning."—*Detached Thoughts*, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 422, 423.]

2. ["Like Sylla, I have always believed that all things depend upon Fortune, and nothing upon ourselves. I am not aware of any one thought or action, worthy of being called good to myself or others, which is not to be attributed to the Good Goddess—Fortune!"—*Ibid.*, p. 451.]

LXIII.

To turn,—and to return;—the Devil take it!
This story slips for ever through my fingers,
Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,
It needs must be—and so it rather lingers;
This form of verse began, I can't well break it,
But must keep time and tune like public singers;
But if I once get through my present measure,
I'll take another when I'm next at leisure.

LXIV.

They went to the Ridotto ('tis a place
To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,[1]
Just to divert my thoughts a little space
Because I'm rather hippish, and may borrow
Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face
May lurk beneath each mask; and as my sorrow
Slackens its pace sometimes, I'll make, or find,
Something shall leave it half an hour behind.)

LXV.

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,
Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her lips;
To some she whispers, others speaks aloud;
To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,
Complains of warmth, and this complaint avowed,
Her lover brings the lemonade, she sips;
She then surveys, condemns, but pities still
Her dearest friends for being dressed so ill.

LXVI.

One has false curls, another too much paint,
A third—where did she buy that frightful turban?
A fourth's so pale she fears she's going to faint,
A fifth's look's vulgar, dowdyish, and suburban,
A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,
A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her bane,

1. "January 19th, 1818. To-morrow will be a Sunday, and full Ridotto."—[*MS.*]

And lo! an eighth appears,—"I'll see no more!"
For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a score.

LXVII.

Meantime, while she was thus at others gazing,
Others were levelling their looks at her;
She heard the men's half-whispered mode of praising
And, till 'twas done, determined not to stir;
The women only thought it quite amazing
That, at her time of life, so many were
Admirers still,—but "Men are so debased,
Those brazen Creatures always suit their taste."

LXVIII.

For my part, now, I ne'er could understand
Why naughty women—but I won't discuss
A thing which is a scandal to the land,
I only don't see why it should be thus;
And if I were but in a gown and band,
Just to entitle me to make a fuss,
I'd preach on this till Wilberforce and Romilly
Should quote in their next speeches from my homily.

LXIX.

While Laura thus was seen, and seeing, smiling,
Talking, she knew not why, and cared not what,
So that her female friends, with envy broiling,
Beheld her airs, and triumph, and all that;
And well-dressed males still kept before her filing,
And passing bowed and mingled with her chat;
More than the rest one person seemed to stare
With pertinacity that's rather rare.

LXX.

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany;
And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,
Because the Turks so much admire philogyny,[1]
Although their usage of their wives is sad;

1. —— *philoguny.*—[*MS.*]

'Tis said they use no better than a dog any
Poor woman, whom they purchase like a pad:
They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em,
Four wives by law, and concubines "ad libitum."

LXXI.

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,
They scarcely can behold their male relations,
So that their moments do not pass so gaily
As is supposed the case with northern nations;
Confinement, too, must make them look quite palely;
And as the Turks abhor long conversations,
Their days are either passed in doing nothing,
Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

LXXII.

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism;
Nor write, and so they don't affect the Muse;
Were never caught in epigram or witticism,
Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews,—
In Harams learning soon would make a pretty schism,
But luckily these Beauties are no "Blues;"
No bustling *Botherby*[1] have they to show 'em
"That charming passage in the last new poem:"

1. [Botherby is, of course, Sotheby. In the *English Bards* (line 818) he is bracketed with Gifford and Macneil *honoris causâ*, but at this time (1817–18) Byron was "against" Sotheby, under the impression that he had sent him "an anonymous note . . . accompanying a copy of the *Castle of Chillon*, etc. [*sic*]." Sotheby affirmed that he had not written the note, but Byron, while formally accepting the disclaimer, refers to the firmness of his "former persuasion," and renews the attack with increased bitterness. "As to *Beppo*, I will not alter or suppress a syllable for any man's pleasure but my own. If there are resemblances between Botherby and Sotheby, or Sotheby and Botherby, the fault is not mine, but in the person who resembles,—or the persons who trace a resemblance. *Who* find out this resemblance? Mr. S.'s *friends*. *Who* go about moaning over him and laughing? Mr. S.'s *friends*" (Letters to Murray, April 17, 23, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 226–230). A writer of satires is of necessity satirical, and Sotheby, like "Wordswords and Co.," made excellent "copy." If he had not written the "anonymous note," he was, from Byron's point of view, ridiculous and a bore, and "ready to hand" to be tossed up in rhyme as *Botherby*. (For a brief account of Sotheby, see *Poetical Works*, i. 362, *note* 2.)]

LXXIII.

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for Fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time,
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small "Triton of the minnows," the sublime
Of Mediocrity, the furious tame,
The Echo's echo, usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

LXXIV.

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
The approving "*Good!*" (by no means GOOD in law)
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,[1]
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

LXXV.

One hates an author that's *all author*—fellows
In foolscap uniforms turned up with ink,
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,
One don't know what to say to them, or think,
Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;
Of Coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink
Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
These unquenched snuffings of the midnight taper.

LXXVI.

Of these same we see several, and of others,
Men of the world, who know the World like Men,
Scott, Rogers, Moore, and all the better brothers,
Who think of something else besides the pen;
But for the children of the "Mighty Mother's,"
The would-be wits, and can't-be gentlemen,

1. *Gorging the slightest slice of Flattery raw.*—[*MS. in a letter to Murray, April* 11, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 218.]

I leave them to their daily "tea is ready,"[1]
Smug coterie, and literary lady.

LXXVII.

The poor dear Mussul*women* whom I mention
Have none of these instructive pleasant people,
And *one* would seem to them a new invention,
Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple;
I think 'twould almost be worth while to pension
(Though best-sown projects very often reap ill)
A missionary author—just to preach
Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

LXXVIII.

No Chemistry for them unfolds her gases,
No Metaphysics are let loose in lectures,
No Circulating Library amasses
Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures
Upon the living manners, as they pass us;
No Exhibition glares with annual pictures;
They stare not on the stars from out their attics,
Nor deal (thank God for that!) in Mathematics.[2]

LXXIX.

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,
I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,
I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose;
I fear I have a little turn for Satire,
And yet methinks the older that one grows
Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though Laughter
Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

1. [So, too, elsewhere. Wordsworth and Coleridge had depreciated Voltaire, and Byron, *en revanche*, contrasts the "tea-drinking neutrality of morals" of the *school*, *i.e.* the Lake poets, with "their convenient treachery in politics" (see *Letters*, 1901, v. 600).]

2. ["Lady Byron," her husband wrote, "would have made an excellent wrangler at Cambridge." Compare—

"Her favourite science was the mathematical."
Don Juan, Canto I. stanza xii. line 1.]

LXXX.[1]

Oh, Mirth and Innocence! Oh, Milk and Water!
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
Abominable Man no more allays
His thirst with such pure beverage. No matter,
I love you both, and both shall have my praise:
Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy!—
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

LXXXI.

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,
Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,
Which seems to say, "Madam, I do you honour,
And while I please to stare, you'll please to stay."
Could staring win a woman, this had won her,
But Laura could not thus be led astray;
She had stood fire too long and well, to boggle
Even at this Stranger's most outlandish ogle.

LXXXII.

The morning now was on the point of breaking,
A turn of time at which I would advise
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking
In any other kind of exercise,
To make their preparations for forsaking
The ball-room ere the Sun begins to rise,
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,
His blushes make them look a little pale.

LXXXIII.

I've seen some balls and revels in my time,
And stayed them over for some silly reason,
And then I looked (I hope it was no crime)
To see what lady best stood out the season;
And though I've seen some thousands in their prime
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn)
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the Dawn.

1. [Stanza lxxx. is not in the original MS.]

LXXXIV.

The name of this Aurora I'll not mention,
Although I might, for she was nought to me
More than that patent work of God's invention,
A charming woman, whom we like to see;
But writing names would merit reprehension,
Yet if you like to find out this fair *She*,
At the next London or Parisian ball
You still may mark her cheek, out-blooming all.

LXXXV.

Laura, who knew it would not do at all
To meet the daylight after seven hours' sitting
Among three thousand people at a ball,
To make her curtsey thought it right and fitting;
The Count was at her elbow with her shawl,
And they the room were on the point of quitting,
When lo! those curséd Gondoliers had got
Just in the very place where they *should not*.

LXXXVI.

In this they're like our coachmen, and the cause
Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling, hauling,
With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,
They make a never intermitted bawling.
At home, our Bow-street gem'men keep the laws,
And here a sentry stands within your calling;
But for all that, there is a deal of swearing,
And nauseous words past mentioning or bearing.

LXXXVII.

The Count and Laura found their boat at last,
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,
Discussing all the dances gone and past;
The dancers and their dresses, too, beside;
Some little scandals eke; but all aghast
(As to their palace-stairs the rowers glide)
Sate Laura by the side of her adorer,[1]
When lo! the Mussulman was there before her!

1. *Sate Laura with a kind of comic horror.*—[*MS.*]

LXXXVIII.

"Sir," said the Count, with brow exceeding grave,
"Your unexpected presence here will make
It necessary for myself to crave
Its import? But perhaps 'tis a mistake;
I hope it is so; and, at once to waive
All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;
You understand my meaning, or you *shall*."
"Sir," (quoth the Turk) "'tis no mistake at all:

LXXXIX.

"That Lady is *my wife!*" Much wonder paints
The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;
But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,
Italian females don't do so outright;
They only call a little on their Saints,
And then come to themselves, almost, or quite;
Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and sprinkling faces,
And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

XC.

She said,—what could she say? Why, not a word;
But the Count courteously invited in
The Stranger, much appeased by what he heard:
"Such things, perhaps, we'd best discuss within,"
Said he; "don't let us make ourselves absurd
In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,
For then the chief and only satisfaction
Will be much quizzing on the whole transaction."

XCI.

They entered, and for Coffee called—it came,
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,
Although the way they make it's not the same.
Now Laura, much recovered, or less loth
To speak, cries "Beppo! what's your pagan name?
Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!
And how came you to keep away so long?
Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong?

XCII.

"And are you *really, truly*, now a Turk?
With any other women did you wive?
Is't true they use their fingers for a fork?
Well, that's the prettiest Shawl—as I'm alive!
You'll give it me? They say you eat no pork.
And how so many years did you contrive
To—Bless me! did I ever? No, I never
Saw a man grown so yellow! How's your liver?

XCIII.

"Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you not;
It shall be shaved before you're a day older:
Why do you wear it? Oh! I had forgot—
Pray don't you think the weather here is colder?
How do I look? You shan't stir from this spot
In that queer dress, for fear that some beholder
Should find you out, and make the story known.
How short your hair is! Lord! how grey it's grown!"

XCIV.

What answer Beppo made to these demands
Is more than I know. He was cast away
About where Troy stood once, and nothing stands;
Became a slave of course, and for his pay
Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands
Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,
He joined the rogues and prospered, and became
A renegado of indifferent fame.

XCV.

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so
Keen the desire to see his home again,
He thought himself in duty bound to do so,
And not be always thieving on the main;
Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,
And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,
Bound for Corfu: she was a fine polacca,
Manned with twelve hands, and laden with tobacco.

XCVI.

Himself, and much (heaven knows how gotten !) cash,
He then embarked, with risk of life and limb,
And got clear off, although the attempt was rash;
He said that *Providence* protected him—
For my part, I say nothing—lest we clash
In our opinions :—well—the ship was trim,
Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,
Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.[1]

XCVII.

They reached the Island, he transferred his lading,
And self and live stock to another bottom,
And passed for a true Turkey-merchant, trading
With goods of various names—but I've forgot 'em.
However, he got off by this evading,
Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;
And thus at Venice landed to reclaim
His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

XCVIII.

His wife received, the Patriarch re-baptized him,
(He made the Church a present, by the way;)
He then threw off the garments which disguised him,
And borrowed the Count's smallclothes for a day:
His friends the more for his long absence prized him,
Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,
With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them,
For stories—but *I* don't believe the half of them.

XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffered, his old age
With wealth and talking made him some amends;
Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,
I've heard the Count and he were always friends.
My pen is at the bottom of a page,
Which being finished, here the story ends:
'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done,
But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

1. [Cap Bon, or Ras Adden, is the northernmost point of Tunis.]

ODE ON VENICE.

ODE ON VENICE.[1]

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
  Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
  A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—anything but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years[2]
Of wealth and glory turned to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,[3]

1. [The *Ode on Venice* (originally *Ode*) was completed by July 10, 1818 (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 245), but was published at the same time as *Mazeppa* and *A Fragment*, June 28, 1819. The *motif*, a lamentation over the decay and degradation of Venice, re-echoes the sentiments expressed in the opening stanzas (i.–xix.) of the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold*. A realistic description of the "Hour of Death" (lines 37–55), and a eulogy of the United States of America (lines 133–160), give distinction to the *Ode*.]

2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xiii. lines 4–6.]

3. [Compare *ibid.*, stanza xi. lines 5–9.]

And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy Tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas[1]—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoftened terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere Death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;
And then he talks of Life, and how again
He feels his spirit soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.[2]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza iii. lines 1-4.]
2. [Compare *The Prisoner of Chillon*, line 178, *note* 2, *vide ante*, p. 21.]

II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
For 't is our nature strikes us down: the beasts
Slaughtered in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order—they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,[1]
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your Sires have left you, all that Time
Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
Save the few spirits who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engendered
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tendered,
Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,[2]
Maddened with centuries of drought, are loud,

1. [In contrasting Sheridan with Brougham, Byron speaks of "the red-hot ploughshares of public life."—*Diary*, March 10, 1814, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 397.]

2. [Compare—

"At last it [the mob] takes to weapons such as men
Snatch when despair makes human hearts less pliant.
Then comes 'the tug of war;'—'t will come again,
I rather doubt; and I would fain say 'fie on't,'
If I had not perceived that Revolution
Alone can save the earth from Hell's pollution."

Don Juan, Canto VIII. stanza li. lines 3–8.]

And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they ploughed
The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bowed,
And their dead palates chewed the cud of pain:—
Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight
With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations—fair, when free—
For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers [1]
With Freedom—godlike Triad! how you sate!
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate
All were enwrapped: the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes
Were of the softer order, born of Love—
She drank no blood, nor fattened on the dead,
But gladdened where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the Cross, that from above
Hallowed her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,[2]
Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe

1. [Compare Lord Tennyson's stanzas—
"Of old sat Freedom on the heights."]

2. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xiv. line 3, *note* 1 and line 6, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 339, 340.]

The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And called the "kingdom" [1] of a conquering foe,—
But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crushed, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe; [2]
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time,
For Tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean [3]
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeathed—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a Monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,[4]

1. [In 1814 the Italian possessions of the Emperor of Austria were "constituted into separate and particular states, under the title of the kingdom of Venetian Lombardy."—Koch's *Europe*, p. 234.]

2. [The Prince of Orange . . . was proclaimed Sovereign Prince of the Low Countries, December 1, 1813; and in the following year, August 13, 1814, on the condition that he should make a part of the Germanic Confederation, he received the title of King of the Netherlands.—*Ibid.*, p. 233.]

3. [Compare "Oceano dissociabili," Hor., *Odes*, I. iii. 22.]

4. [In October, 1812, the American sloop *Wasp* captured the English brig *Frolic;* and December 29, 1812, the *Constitution* compelled the frigate *Java* to surrender. In the following year, February 24, 1813, the *Hornet* met the *Peacock* off the Demerara, and reduced her in fifteen minutes to a sinking condition. On June 28, 1814, the sloop-of-

May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheaply earned with blood.—Still, still, for ever
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Dammed like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be
Where the extinguished Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee![1]

war *Wasp* captured and burned the sloop *Reindeer*, and on September 11, 1814, the *Confiance*, commanded by Commodore Downie, and other vessels surrendered."—*History of America*, by Justin Winsor, 1888, vii. 380, *seq.*]

1. [Byron repented, or feigned to repent, this somewhat provocative eulogy of the Great Republic: "Somebody has sent me some American abuse of *Mazeppa* and 'the Ode;' in future I will compliment nothing but Canada, and desert to the English."—Letter to Murray, February 21, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 410. It is possible that the allusion is to an article, "Mazeppa and Don Juan," in the *Analectic Magazine*, November, 1819, vol. xiv. pp. 405–410.]

MAZEPPA.

INTRODUCTION TO *MAZEPPA*.

Mazeppa, a legend of the Russian Ukraine, or frontier region, is based on the passage in Voltaire's *Charles XII.* prefixed as the "Advertisement" to the poem. Voltaire seems to have known very little about the man or his history, and Byron, though he draws largely on his imagination, was content to take his substratum of fact from Voltaire. The "true story of Mazeppa" is worth re-telling for its own sake, and lends a fresh interest and vitality to the legend. Ivan Stepánovitch Mazeppa (or Mazepa), born about the year 1645, was of Cossack origin, but appears to have belonged, by descent or creation, to the lesser nobility of the semi-Polish Volhynia. He began life (1660) as a page of honour in the Court of King John Casimir V. of Poland, where he studied Latin, and acquired the tongue and pen of eloquent statesmanship. Banished from the court on account of a quarrel, he withdrew to his mother's estate in Volhynia, and there, to beguile the time, made love to the wife of a neighbouring magnate, the *pane* or Lord Falbowski. The intrigue was discovered, and to avenge his wrongs the outraged husband caused Mazeppa to be stripped to the skin, and bound to his own steed. The horse, lashed into madness, and terror-stricken by the discharge of a pistol, started off at a gallop, and rushing "thorough bush, thorough briar," carried his torn and bleeding rider into the courtyard of his own mansion!

With regard to the sequel or issue of this episode, history is silent, but when the curtain rises again (A.D. 1674) Mazeppa is discovered in the character of writer-general or foreign secretary to Peter Doroshénko, hetman or president of the Western Ukraine, on the hither side of the Dniéper. From the service of Doroshénko, who came to an untimely end, he passed by a series of accidents into the employ of his rival, Samoïlovitch, hetman of the Eastern Ukraine, and, as his secretary or envoy, continued to attract the notice

and to conciliate the good will of the (regent) Tzarina Sophia and her eminent *boyard*, Prince Basil Golitsyn. A time came (1687) when it served the interests of Russia to degrade Samoïlovitch, and raise Mazeppa to the post of hetman, and thenceforward, for twenty years and more, he held something like a regal sway over the whole of the Ukraine (a fertile "no-man's land," watered by the Dniéper and its tributaries), openly the loyal and zealous ally of his neighbour and suzerain, Peter the Great.

How far this allegiance was genuine, or whether a secret preference for Poland, the land of his adoption, or a long-concealed impatience of Muscovite suzerainty would in any case have urged him to revolt, must remain doubtful, but it is certain that the immediate cause of a final reversal of the allegiance and a break with the Tsar was a second and still more fateful *affaire du cœur*. The hetman was upwards of sixty years of age, but, even so, he fell in love with his god-daughter, Matréna, who, in spite of difference of age and ecclesiastical kinship, not only returned his love, but, to escape the upbraidings and persecution of her mother, took refuge under his roof. Mazeppa sent the girl back to her home, but, as his love-letters testify, continued to woo her with the tenderest and most passionate solicitings; and, although she finally yielded to *force majeure* and married another suitor, her parents nursed their revenge, and endeavoured to embroil the hetman with the Tsar. For a time their machinations failed, and Matréna's father, Kotchúbey, together with his friend Iskra, were executed with the Tsar's assent and approbation. Before long, however, Mazeppa, who had been for some time past in secret correspondence with the Swedes, signalized his defection from Peter by offering his services first to Stanislaus of Poland, and afterwards to Charles XII. of Sweden, who was meditating the invasion of Russia.

"Pultowa's day," July 8, 1709, was the last of Mazeppa's power and influence, and in the following year (March 31, 1710), "he died of old age, perhaps of a broken heart," at Várnitza, a village near Bender, on the Dniester, whither he had accompanied the vanquished and fugitive Charles.

Such was Mazeppa, a man destined to pass through the crowded scenes of history, and to take his stand among the greater heroes of romance. His deeds of daring, his intrigues and his treachery, have been and still are sung by the wandering minstrels of the Ukraine. His story has passed into literature. His ride forms the subject of an *Orientale* (1829) by Victor Hugo, who treats Byron's theme symbolically; and the romance of his old age, his love for his god-daughter

Matréna, with its tragical issue, the judicial murder of Kotchúbey and Iskra, are celebrated by the "Russian Byron" Pushkin, in his poem *Poltava*. He forms the subject of a novel, *Iwan Wizigin*, by Bulgarin, 1830, and of tragedies by I. Slowacki, 1840, and Rudolph von Gottschall. From literature Mazeppa has passed into art in the "symphonic poem" of Franz Lizt (1857); and, yet again, *pour comble de gloire, Mazeppa, or The Wild Horse of Tartary*, is the title of a "romantic drama," first played at the Royal Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge, on Easter Monday, 1831; and revived at Astley's Theatre, when Adah Isaacs Menken appeared as "Mazeppa," October 3, 1864. (*Peter the Great*, by Eugene Schuyler, 1884, ii. 115, *seq.*; *Le Fils de Pierre Le Grand, Mazeppa, etc.*, by Viscount E. Melchior de Vogüé, Paris, 1884; *Peter the Great*, by Oscar Browning, 1899, pp. 219–229.)

Of the composition of *Mazeppa* we know nothing, except that on September 24, 1818, "it was still to finish" (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 264). It was published together with an *Ode* (*Venice: An Ode*) and *A Fragment* (see *Letters*, 1899, iii. Appendix IV. pp. 446–453), June 28, 1819.

Notices of *Mazeppa* appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, July, 1819, vol. v. p. 429 (for *John Gilpin* and *Mazeppa*, by William Maginn, *vide ibid.*, pp. 434–439); the *Monthly Review*, July, 1819, vol. 89, pp. 309–321; and the *Eclectic Review*, August, 1819, vol. xii. pp. 147–156.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"Celui qui remplissait alors cette place était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Podolie: il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent: il resta longtems parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—Voltaire, *Hist. de Charles XII.*, 1772, p. 205.

"Le roi, fuyant et poursuivi, eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite,[i.] ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille."—P. 222.

"Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer, à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa

i. *la suite.*—[*MS. and First Edition.*]

blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs, qui le cherchaient de tous côtés."—P. 224.

MAZEPPA.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,[1]
When Fortune left the royal Swede—
Around a slaughtered army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had passed to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again—
Until a day more dark and drear,[2]
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly[3]

1. [The Battle of Poltáva on the Vórskla took place July 8, 1709. "The Swedish troops (under Rehnskjöld) numbered only 12,500 men. . . . The Russian army was four times as numerous. . . . The Swedes seemed at first to get the advantage, . . . but everywhere they were overpowered and surrounded—beaten in detail; and though for two hours they fought with the fierceness of despair, they were forced either to surrender or to flee. . . . Over 2800 officers and men were taken prisoners."—*Peter the Great*, by Eugene Schuyler, 1884, ii. 148, 149.]

2. [Napoleon began his retreat from Moscow, October 15, 1812. He was defeated at Vitepsk, November 14; Krasnoi, November 16–18; and at Beresina, November 25–29, 1812.]

3. ["It happened . . . that during the operations of June 27–28,

By day and night through field and flood,
Stained with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When Truth had nought to dread from Power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russians' slave.
This, too, sinks after many a league
Of well-sustained, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests darkling,
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A King must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,[1]
In outworn Nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff, his limbs were stark;
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will:

Charles was severely wounded in the foot. On the morning of June 28 he was riding close to the river . . . when a ball struck him on the left heel, passed through his foot, and lodged close to the great toe. . . . On the night of July 7, 1709 . . . Charles had the foot carefully dressed, while he wore a spurred boot on his sound foot, put on his uniform, and placed himself on a kind of litter, in which he was drawn before the lines of the army. . . . [After the battle, July 8] those who survived took refuge in flight, the King—whose litter had been smashed by a cannon-ball, and who was carried by the soldiers on crossed poles—going with them, and the Russians neglecting to pursue. In this manner they reached their former camp."—*Charles XII.*, by Oscar Browning, 1899, pp. 213, 220, 224, *sq.* For an account of his flight southwards into Turkish territory, *vide post*, p. 233, *note* 1. The bivouack "under a savage tree" must have taken place on the night of the battle, at the first halt, between Poltáva and the junction of the Vórskla and Dniéper.]

1. [Compare—

"Thus elms and thus the savage cherry grows."
Dryden's *Georgics*, ii. 24.]

All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs !—alas ! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinned it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed;
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made[1]
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubbed down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smoothed his fetlocks and his mane,
And slacked his girth, and stripped his rein,
And joyed to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too,
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obeyed his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around,—and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight,—
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

1. [For some interesting particulars concerning the Hetman Mazeppa, see Barrow's *Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great*, 1832, pp. 181–202.]

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—
If still the powder filled the pan,
And flints unloosened kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt;
And next the venerable man,
From out his havresack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the Monarch and his men
The whole or portion offered then
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe;—
And then he said—"Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said or more have done
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus and thou:
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
For pricking on o'er flood and field."
Mazeppa answered—"Ill betide
The school wherein I learned to ride!"
Quoth Charles—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learned the art so well?"
Mazeppa said—"'Twere long to tell;
And we have many a league to go,
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,

Before our steeds may graze at ease,
Beyond the swift Borysthenes:[1]
And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop."—"But I request,"
Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
This tale of thine, and I may reap,
Perchance, from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—
Aye 'twas,—when Casimir was king[2]—
John Casimir,—I was his page
Six summers, in my earlier age:[3]
A learnéd monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your Majesty;
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
He reigned in most unseemly quiet;

1. [The Dniéper.]

2. [John Casimir (1609-1672), Jesuit, cardinal, and king, was a Little-Polander, not to say a pro-Cossack, and suffered in consequence. At the time of his proclamation as King of Poland, November, 1649, Poland was threatened by an incursion of Cossacks. The immediate cause was, or was supposed to be, the ill treatment which [Bogdán Khmelnítzky] a Lithuanian had received at the hands of the Polish governor, Czaplinski. The governor, it was alleged, had carried off, ravished, and put to death Khmelnítzky's wife, and, not content with this outrage, had set fire to the house of the Cossack, "in which perished his infant son in his cradle." Others affirmed that the Cossack had begun the strife by causing the governor "to be publicly and ignominiously whipped," and that it was the Cossack's mill and not his house which he burnt. Be that as it may, Casimir, on being exhorted to take the field, declined, on the ground that the Poles "ought not to have set fire to Khmelnítzky's house." It is probably to this unpatriotic determination to look at both sides of the question that he earned the character of being an unwarlike prince. As a matter of fact, he fought and was victorious against the Cossacks and Tartars at Bereteskow and elsewhere. (See *Mod. Univ. Hist.*, xxxiv. 203, 217; Puffend, *Hist. Gener.*, 1732, iv. 328; and *Histoire des Kosaques*, par M. (Charles Louis) Le Sur, 1814, i. 321.)]

3. [A.D. 1660 or thereabouts.]

Not that he had no cares to vex;
He loved the Muses and the Sex;[1]
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress—or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
All Warsaw gathered round his gates
To gaze upon his splendid court,
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpensioned, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter.
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And signed my odes 'Despairing Thyrsis.'
There was a certain Palatine,[2]
A Count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt or silver mine;[3]
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from Heaven he had been sent;
He had such wealth in blood and ore
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost looked like want of head,
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of this opinion;
His junior she by thirty years,

1. [According to the editor of Voltaire's Works (*Œuvres*, Beuchot, 1830, xix. 378, *note* 1), there was a report that Casimir, after his retirement to Paris in 1670, secretly married "*Marie Mignot, fille d'une blanchisseuse;*" and there are other tales of other loves, *e.g.* Ninon de Lenclos.]

2. [According to the biographers, Mazeppa's intrigue took place after he had been banished from the court of Warsaw, and had retired to his estate in Volhynia. The *pane* [Lord] Falbowsky, the old husband of the young wife, was a neighbouring magnate. It was a case of "love in idlenesse."—*Vide ante*, "The Introduction to *Mazeppa*," p. 201.]

3. This comparison of a "*salt* mine" may, perhaps, be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Grew daily tired of his dominion;
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
To Virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two—some glances
At Warsaw's youth—some songs, and dances,
Awaited but the usual chances,
Those happy accidents which render
The coldest dames so very tender,
To deck her Count with titles given,
'Tis said, as passports into Heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these, who have deserved them most.

V.

"I was a goodly stripling then;
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree,
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength—youth—gaiety,
A port, not like to this ye see,
But smooth, as all is rugged now;
For Time, and Care, and War, have ploughed
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavowed
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday;
This change was wrought, too, long ere age
Had ta'en my features for his page:
With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength—my courage—or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree,
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's [1] form—

1. [It is improbable that Byron, when he wrote these lines, was thinking of Theresa Gamba, Countess Guiccioli. He met her for the first time "in the autumn of 1818, three days after her marriage," but it was not till April, 1819, that he made her acquaintance. (See *Life*, p. 393, and *Letters*, 1900, iv. 289.) The copy of *Mazeppa* sent home

Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
  The memory is so quick and warm;
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
  Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
  Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise of midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seemed to melt to its own beam;
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die.[1]
A brow like a midsummer lake,
  Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
  And heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
  I loved her then, I love her still;
And such as I am, love indeed
  In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age

1. *Until it proves a joy to die.*—[*MS. erased.*]

to Murray is in the Countess Guiccioli's handwriting, but the assertion (see Byron's *Works*, 1832, xi. 178), that "it is impossible not to suspect that the Poet had some circumstances of his own personal history, when he portrayed the fair Polish *Theresa*, her faithful lover, and the jealous rage of the old Count Palatine," is open to question. It was Marianna Segati who had "large, black, Oriental eyes, with that peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely among *Europeans* . . . forehead remarkably good" (see lines 208-220); not Theresa Guiccioli, who was a "blonde," with a "brilliant complexion and blue eyes." (See Letters to Moore, November 17, 1816; and to Murray, May 6, 1819: *Letters*, 1900, iv. 8, 289, *note* 1.) Moreover, the "Maid of Athens" was called Theresa. Dr. D. Englaender, in his exhaustive monologue, *Lord Byron's Mazeppa*, pp. 48, *sq.*, insists on the identity of the Theresa of the poem with the Countess Guiccioli, but from this contention the late Professor Kölbing (see *Englische Studien*, 1898, vol. xxiv. pp. 448-458) dissents.]

With the vain shadow of the past,—
As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

"We met—we gazed—I saw, and sighed;
She did not speak, and yet replied;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines—
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric [1] wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.
I saw, and sighed—in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept,
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion—then, even then,
I longed, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again,
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour.—There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is—I have forgot the name—
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I recked not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.
I watched her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,

1. [Compare *Parisina*, line 480. J. Jekyll says that "electric," on Mazeppa's lips, is an anachronism. (See *Letters* [*of J. J.*], 1894, pp. 81, 82.)]

That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Played on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.[1]
  Then through my brain the thought did pass,
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
  All incoherent as they were;
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listened—'tis enough—
  Who listens once will listen twice;
  Her heart, be sure, is not of ice—
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again—
  They tell me, Sire, you never knew
  Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am—or rather *was*—a Prince,
  A chief of thousands, and could lead
  Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control—But to resume:
  I loved, and was beloved again;
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
  But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.

1. —— *but not*
For that which we had both forgot.—[*MS. erased.*]

My days and nights were nothing—all
Except that hour which doth recall,
In the long lapse from youth to age,
No other like itself: I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more, and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth,
Save Nature's gift of Youth and Health.
We met in secret—doubly sweet,[1]
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that—I would have given
My life but to have called her mine
In the full view of Earth and Heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us; the Devil
On such occasions should be civil—
The Devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile gave vent—
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth—
I was unarmed; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do?
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succour near,
And almost on the break of day;

1. [Compare—

"We loved, Sir, used to meet:
How sad, and bad, and mad it was!
But then how it was sweet!"

Confessions, by Robert Browning.]

I did not think to see another,
My moments seemed reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resigned me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate.
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line;
Because unto himself he seemed
The first of men, nor less he deemed
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath! with a *page*—perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing;
But with a stripling of a page—
I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

"'Bring forth the horse!'—the horse was brought!
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who looked as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled—
'Twas but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led:
They bound me on, that menial throng,
Upon his back with many a thong;

They loosed him with a sudden lash—
Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

"Away!—away!—My breath was gone,
I saw not where he hurried on:
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foamed—away!—away!
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:
With sudden wrath I wrenched my head,
And snapped the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
Howled back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me—for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone—bar—moat—bridge—or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er the fortress was.
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorched and blackening roof
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
They little thought that day of pain,
When launched, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,

That one day I should come again,
With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The Count for his uncourteous ride.
They played me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,
They bound me to his foaming flank:
At length I played them one as frank—
For Time at last sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

"Away!—away!—my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind!
All human dwellings left behind,
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night [1]
Is chequered with the Northern light.
Town—village—none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black; [2]
And, save the scarce seen battlement
On distant heights of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had marched o'er;

1. [Compare—

"In sleep I heard the northern gleams; . . .
In rustling conflict through the skies,
I heard, I saw the flashes drive."

The Complaint, stanza i. lines 3, 5, 6.

See, too, reference to *Hearne's Journey from Hudson's Bay, etc.*, in prefatory note, *Works* of W. Wordsworth, 1889, p. 86.]

2. [As Dr. Englaender points out (*Mazeppa*, 1897, p. 73), it is probable that Byron derived his general conception of the scenery of the Ukraine from passages in Voltaire's *Charles XII.*, *e.g.*: "Depuis Grodno jusqu'au Borysthène, en tirant vers l'orient ce sont des marais, des déserts, des forêts immenses" (*Œuvres*. 1829, xxiv. 170). The exquisite beauty of the virgin steppes, the long rich grass, the wild-flowers, the "diviner air," to which the Viscount de Vogüé testifies so eloquently in his *Mazeppa*, were not in the "mind's eye" of the poet or the historian.]

And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod:
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by—
I could have answered with a sigh—
But fast we fled,—away!—away!—
And I could neither sigh nor pray;
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane;
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career:
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slackened in his speed;
But no—my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became:
Each motion which I made to free
My swoln limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright:
I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low—
But yet he swerved as from a blow;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang:
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

"We neared the wild wood—'twas so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side:
'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste,—
But these were few and far between,
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strown by those autumnal eves
That nip the forest's foliage dead,

Discoloured with a lifeless red,[1]
Which stands thereon like stiffened gore
Upon the slain when battle's o'er;
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frost o'er every tombless head—
So cold and stark—the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarred with cold;
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,—
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they followed on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wished for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish—if it must be so—
At bay, destroying many a foe!
When first my courser's race begun,
I wished the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed:
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe—
Nor faster falls the blinding snow

1. *And stains it with a lifeless red.*—[*MS.*]
Which clings to it like stiffened gore.—[*MS. erased.*]

Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewildered with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he passed—
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild—
All furious as a favoured child
Balked of its wish; or—fiercer still—
A woman piqued—who has her will!

XIII.

"The wood was passed; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold—
Prolonged endurance tames the bold;
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er:
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path—
Cold—hunger—sorrow—shame—distress—
Thus bound in Nature's nakedness;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirred beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattle-snake's, in act to strike—
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?[1]
The earth gave way, the skies rolled round,
I seemed to sink upon the ground;
But erred—for I was fastly bound.
My heart turned sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbbed awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,

1. [The thread on which the successive tropes or images are loosely strung seems to give if not to snap at this point. "Considering that Mazeppa was sprung of a race which in moments of excitement, when an enemy has stamped upon its vitals, springs up to repel the attack, it was only to be expected that he should sink beneath the blow—and sink he did." The conclusion is at variance with the premiss.]

And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther. He who dies
Can die no more than then I died,
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride.[1]
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain;
But soon it passed, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust!
No matter! I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV.

"My thoughts came back. Where was I? Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb,—till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflowed, though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight returned, though dim; alas!
And thickened, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam too of the sky,

1. [Compare—

"'Alas,' said she, 'this ghastly ride,
Dear Lady! it hath wildered you.'"

Christabel, Part I. lines 216, 217.]

Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way, struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffened limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
And dashes off the ascending waves,
And onward we advance!
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day[1]
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

"With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top: a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward—seems,
Like precipices in our dreams,[2]
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white,

1. [Compare—

"How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare."

Ancient Mariner, Part V. lines 393, 394.]

2. [Compare—

"From precipices of distempered sleep."

Sonnet, "No more my visionary soul shall dwell," by S. T. Coleridge, attributed by Southey to Favell.—*Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, 1895, i. 83; Southey's *Life and Correspondence*, 1849, i. 224.]

Or scattered spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right:
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like a hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus rose [1]
To make him merry with my woes:
That very cheat had cheered me then!
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

"Onward we went—but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went:
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour!
But, useless all to me,
His new-born tameness nought availed—
My limbs were bound; my force had failed,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bonds so starkly tied,
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolonged their pain.
The dizzy race seemed almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:

1. [Compare *Werner*, iii. 3—

"Burn still,
Thou little light! Thou art my *ignis fatuus*.
My stationary Will-o'-the-wisp!—So! So!"

Compare, too, *Don Juan*, Canto XI. stanza xxvii. line 6, and Canto XV. stanza liv. line 6.]

Some streaks announced the coming sun—
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day,
How heavily it rolled away!
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And called the radiance from their cars,[1]
And filled the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

"Uprose the sun; the mists were curled
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around—behind—before.
What booted it to traverse o'er
Plain—forest—river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil—
No sign of travel, none of toil—
The very air was mute:
And not an insect's shrill small horn,[1]
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a *werst*,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still staggered on;
And still we were—or seemed—alone:
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh,
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs?[2]

1. *Rose crimson, and forebade the stars*
To sparkle in their radiant cars.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Compare—
"What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn."
Lycidas, line 28.]

2. [Compare—
"Was it the wind through some hollow stone?"
Siege of Corinth, line 521,
Poetical Works, 1900, iii. 471, *note* 1.]

No, no! from out the forest prance
A trampling troop; I see them come!
In one vast squadron they advance!
I strove to cry—my lips were dumb!
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse, and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils never stretched by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet!
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answered, and then fell!
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immoveable,
His first and last career is done!
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong.
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed,
Who seemed the Patriarch of his breed,
Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide;
They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct, from a human eye.
They left me there to my despair,
Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,

From whence I could not extricate
Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
The dying on the dead!
I little deemed another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.

"And there from morn to twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resigned
To that which our foreboding years
Present the worst and last of fears:
Inevitable—even a boon,
Nor more unkind for coming soon,
Yet shunned and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
That Prudence might escape:
At times both wished for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
And welcome in no shape.
And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revelled beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
Whose heritage was Misery.
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future, (which is viewed
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued,)
With nought perhaps to grieve:
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears, to his distempered eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.

To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repaired his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule—to shine—to smite—to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

"The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chained to the chill and stiffening steed!
I thought to mingle there our clay;[1]
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed.
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun[2]
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun;[3]
He flew, and perched, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit

1. [Compare—

"The Architect . . . did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought."
Churchill's Grave, lines 20–23 (*vide ante*, p. 47).]

2. [Compare—

". . . that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun."
Ancient Mariner, Part III. lines 175, 176.]

3. [*Vide infra*, line 816. The raven turns into a vulture a few lines further on. Compare—

"The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw:
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf."
Siege of Corinth, lines 471–474,
Poetical Works, 1900, iv. 468.]

I could have smote, but lacked the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be called a voice,
Together scared him off at length.
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fixed my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold—dull—swimming—dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill—a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that crossed my brain—
A gasp—a throb—a start of pain,
A sigh—and nothing more.

XIX.

"I woke—where was I?—Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that my former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-haired, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall.
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free:
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be,—

But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast:
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unsealed,
She smiled—and I essayed to speak,
  But failed—and she approached, and made
  With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,
And smoothed the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
  And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet![1]
Even music followed her light feet.
  But those she called were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she passed,
Another look on me she cast,
  Another sign she made, to say,
That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
  And she would not delay
Her due return:—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

"She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more?—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest.

1. [Compare—

"Her eyes were eloquent, her words would pose,
  Although she told him, in good modern Greek,
With an Ionian accent, low and sweet,
That he was faint, and must not talk but eat.

"Now Juan could not understand a word,
  Being no Grecian; but he had an ear,
And her voice was the warble of a bird,
  So soft, so sweet, so delicately clear."
Don Juan, Canto II. stanza cl. line 5 to stanza cli. line 4.]

They found me senseless on the plain,
  They bore me to the nearest hut,
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!
  Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
  Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound—naked—bleeding—and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne,—
  What mortal his own doom may guess?
  Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank,—and never
Had I such welcome for a river
  As I shall yield when safely there.[1]
Comrades, good night!"—The Hetman threw
  His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
  With leafy couch already made—
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:
  His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wondered not,—
  The King had been an hour asleep!

1. ["By noon the battle (of Poltáva) was over. . . . Charles had been induced to return to the camp and rally the remainder of the army. In spite of his wounded foot, he had to ride, lying on the neck of his horse. . . . The retreat (down the Vórskla to the Dniéper) began towards evening. . . . On the afternoon of July 11 the Swedes arrived at the little town of Perevolótchna, at the mouth of the Vórskla, where there was a ferry across the Dniéper . . . the king, Mazeppa, and about 1000 men crossed the Dniéper. . . . The king, with the Russian cavalry in hot pursuit, rode as fast as he could to the Bug, where half his escourt was captured, and he barely escaped. Thence he went to Bender, on the Dniester, and for five years remained the guest of Turkey."—*Peter the Great*, by Eugene Schuyler, 1884, ii. 149–151.]

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.

"'T is the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."
CAMPBELL, [*Lochiel's Warning*].

INTRODUCTION TO *THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.*

THE *Prophecy of Dante* was written at Ravenna, during the month of June, 1819, "to gratify" the Countess Guiccioli. Before she left Venice in April she had received a promise from Byron to visit her at Ravenna. "Dante's tomb, the classical pinewood," and so forth, had afforded a pretext for the invitation to be given and accepted, and, at length, when she was, as she imagined, "at the point of death," he arrived, better late than never, "on the Festival of the *Corpus Domini*," which fell that year on the tenth of June (see her communication to Moore, *Life*, p. 399). Horses and books were left behind at Venice, but he could occupy his enforced leisure by "writing something on the subject of Dante" (*ibid.*, p. 402). A heightened interest born of fuller knowledge, in Italian literature and Italian politics, lent zest to this labour of love, and, time and place conspiring, he composed "the best thing he ever wrote" (Letter to Murray, March 23, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 422), his *Vision* (or *Prophecy*) *of Dante.*

It would have been strange if Byron, who had sounded his *Lament* over the sufferings of Tasso, and who had become *de facto* if not *de jure* a naturalized Italian, had forborne to associate his name and fame with the sacred memory of the "Gran padre Alighier." If there had been any truth in Friedrich Schlegel's pronouncement, in a lecture delivered at Vienna in 1814, "that at no time has the greatest and most national of all Italian poets ever been much the favourite of his countrymen," the reproach had become meaningless. As the sumptuous folio edition (4 vols.) of the *Divina Commedia*, published at Florence, 1817–19; a quarto edition (4 vols.) published at Rome, 1815–17; a folio edition (3 vols.) published at Bologna 1819–21, to which the Conte Giovanni Marchetti (*vide* the Preface, *post*,

p. 245) contributed his famous excursus on the allegory in the First Canto of the *Inferno*, and numerous other issues remain to testify, Dante's own countrymen were eager "to pay honours almost divine" to his memory. "The last age," writes Hobhouse, in 1817 (note 18 to Canto IV. of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 496), "seemed inclined to undervalue him. . . . The present generation . . . has returned to the ancient worship, and the *Danteggiare* of the northern Italians is thought even indiscreet by the more moderate Tuscans." Dante was in the air. As Byron wrote in his Diary (January 29, 1821), "Read Schlegel [probably in a translation published at Edinburgh, 1818]. Not a favourite! Why, they talk Dante, write Dante, and think and dream Dante at this moment (1821), to an excess which would be ridiculous, but that he deserves it."

There was, too, another reason why he was minded to write a poem "on the subject of Dante." There was, at this time, a hope, if not a clear prospect, of political change—of throwing off the yoke of the Bourbon, of liberating Italy from the tyrant and the stranger. "Dante was the poet of liberty. Persecution, exile, the dread of a foreign grave, could not shake his principles" (Medwin, *Conversations*, 1824, p. 242). The *Prophecy* was "intended for the Italians," intended to foreshadow as in a vision "liberty and the resurrection of Italy" (*ibid.*, p. 241). As he rode at twilight through the pine forest, or along "the silent shore Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood," the undying past inspired him with a vision of the future, delayed, indeed, for a time, "the flame ending in smoke," but fulfilled after many days, a vision of a redeemed and united Italy.

"The poem," he says, in the Preface, "may be considered as a metrical experiment." In *Beppo*, and the two first cantos of *Don Juan*, he had proved that the *ottava rima* of the Italians, which Frere had been one of the first to transplant, might grow and flourish in an alien soil, and now, by way of a second venture, he proposed to acclimatize the *terza rima*. He was under the impression that Hayley, whom he had held up to ridicule as "for ever feeble, and for ever tame," had been the first and last to try the measure in English; but of Hayley's excellent translation of the three first cantos of the *Inferno* (*vide post*, p. 244, *note* 1), praised but somewhat grudgingly praised by Southey, he had only seen an extract, and of earlier experiments he was altogether ignorant. As a matter of fact, many poets had already essayed, but timidly and without perseverance, to "come to the test in the metrification" of the *Divine Comedy*. Some

twenty-seven lines, "the sole example in English literature of that period, of the use of *terza rima*, obviously copied from Dante" (*Complete Works of Chaucer*, by the Rev. W. Skeat, 1894, i. 76, 261), are imbedded in Chaucer's *Compleint to his Lady*. In the sixteenth century Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey ("Description of the restless state of a lover"), "as novises newly sprung out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch" (Puttenham's *Art of Poesie*, 1589, pp. 48–50); and later again, Daniel ("To the Lady Lucy, Countess of Bedford"), Ben Jonson, and Milton (*Psalms* ii., vi.) afford specimens of *terza rima*. There was, too, one among Byron's contemporaries who had already made trial of the metre in his *Prince Athanase* (1817) and *The Woodman and the Nightingale* (1818), and who, shortly, in his *Ode to the West Wind* (October, 1819, published 1820) was to prove that it was not impossible to write English poetry, if not in genuine *terza rima*, with its interchange of double rhymes, at least in what has been happily styled the "Byronic *terza rima*." It may, however, be taken for granted that, at any rate in June, 1819, these fragments of Shelley's were unknown to Byron. Long after Byron's day, but long years before his dream was realized, Mrs. Browning, in her *Casa Guidi Windows* (1851), in the same metre, re-echoed the same aspiration (see her *Preface*), "that the future of Italy shall not be disinherited." (See for some of these instances of *terza rima*, *Englische Metrik*, von Dr. J. Schipper, 1888, ii. 896. See, too, *The Metre of Dante's Comedy discussed and exemplified*, by Alfred Forman and Harry Buxton Forman, 1878, p. 7.)

The MS. of the *Prophecy of Dante*, together with the Preface, was forwarded to Murray, March 14, 1820; but in spite of some impatience on the part of the author (Letter to Murray, May 8, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 20), and, after the lapse of some months, a pretty broad hint (Letter, August 17, 1820, *ibid.*, p. 165) that "the time for the Dante would be good now . . . as Italy is on the eve of great things," publication was deferred till the following year. *Marino Faliero*, *Doge of Venice*, and the *Prophecy of Dante* were published in the same volume, April 21, 1821.

The *Prophecy of Dante* was briefly but favourably noticed by Jeffrey in his review of *Marino Faliero* (*Edinb. Rev.*, July, 1821, vol. 35, p. 285). "It is a very grand, fervid, turbulent, and somewhat mystical composition, full of the highest sentiment and the highest poetry; . . . but disfigured by many faults of precipitation, and overclouded with many obscurities. Its great fault with common readers

will be that it is not sufficiently intelligible. . . . It is, however, beyond all question, a work of a man of great genius."

Other notices of *Marino Faliero* and the *Prophecy of Dante* appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, April, 1821, vol. 9, pp. 93–103; in the *Monthly Review*, May, 1821, Enlarged Series, vol. 95, pp. 41–50; and in the *Eclectic Review*, June 21, New Series, vol. xv. pp. 518-527.

DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
Where I was born, but where I would not die,
Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy
I dare to build [1] the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic [2] copy of the South's sublime,
THOU art the cause; and howsoever I
Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,
Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obeyed
Are one; but only in the sunny South
Such sounds are uttered, and such charms displayed,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—[3]
Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

Ravenna, June 21, 1819.

1. [Compare—

"He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhime.'
Milton, *Lycidas*, line 11.]

2. [By "Runic" Byron means "Northern," "Anglo-Saxon."]

3. [Compare "In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—*Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and hereafter."—Letter of Byron to the Countess Guiccioli, August 25, 1819, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 350. Compare, too, *Beppo*, stanza xliv.; *vide ante*, p. 173.]

PREFACE.

In the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile,—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects [1] of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

"On this hint I spake," and the result has been the following four cantos, in *terza rima*, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the *Divina Commedia* and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron,[2] and the Prophecy of Nereus

1. [Compare—

"I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:
A little cupola more neat than solemn,
Protects his dust."

Don Juan, Canto IV. stanza civ. lines 1-3.]

2. [The *Cassandra* or *Alexandra* of Lycophron, one of the seven "Pleiades" who adorned the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus (third century B.C.), is "an iambic monologue of 1474 verses, in which Cassandra is made to prophesy the fall of Troy . . . with numerous other historical events, . . . ending with [the reign of] Alexandra the Great." Byron had probably read a translation of the *Cassandra* by Philip Yorke, Viscount Royston (born 1784, wrecked in the *Agatha* off Memel, April 7, 1808), which was issued at Cambridge in 1806. The *Alexandra* forms part of the *Bibliotheca Teubneriana* (ed. G. Kinkel, Lipsiæ, 1880). For the prophecy of Nereus, *vide* Hor., *Odes*, lib. i. c. xv.]

by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the *terza rima* of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto *tried in our language, except it may be by Mr. Hayley*,[1] of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to *Caliph Vathek;* so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet, whose name I have borrowed and most likely taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*[2] translated into Italian *versi sciolti*,—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza or the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember that when I have failed in the imitation of his great "Padre Alighier,"[3] I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory[4] in the

1. [In the notes to his *Essay on Epic Poetry*, 1782 (Epistle iii. pp. 175–197), Hayley (see *English Bards, etc.*, line 310, *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 321, *note* 1) prints a translation of the three first cantos of the *Inferno*, which, he says (p. 172), was written "a few years ago to oblige a particular friend." "Of all Hayley's compositions," writes Southey (*Quart. Rev.*, vol. xxxi. pp. 283, 284), "these specimens are the best . . . in thus following his original Hayley was led into a sobriety and manliness of diction which . . . approached . . . to the manner of a better age."

In a note on the Hall of Eblis, S. Henley quotes with approbation Hayley's translation of lines 1–9 of this Third Canto of the *Inferno*. *Vathek* . . . by W. Beckford, 1868, p. 188.]

2. [*L'Italia: Canto IV. del Pellegrinaggio di Childe Harold* . . . tradotto da Michele Leoni, Italia (London?), 1819, 8º. Leoni also translated the *Lament of Tasso* (*Lamento di Tasso* . . . Recato in Italiano da M. Leoni, Pisa, 1818).]

3. [Alfieri has a sonnet on the tomb of Dante, beginning—

"O gran padre Alighier, se dal ciel miri."

Opere Scelte, di Vittorio Alfieri, 1818, iii. 487.]

4. [The Panther, the Lion, and the She-wolf, which Dante encountered on the "desert slope" (*Inferno*, Canto I. lines 31, *sq.*), were no doubt suggested by Jer. v. 6: "Idcirco percussit eos leo de silva,

first canto of the *Inferno*, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, Pindemonte, or Arici,[1] should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, where my business is with the English one; and be they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

lupus ad vesperam vastavit eos, pardus vigilans super civitates eorum." Symbolically they have been from the earliest times understood as denoting—the panther, lust; the lion, pride; the wolf, avarice; the sins affecting youth, maturity, and old age. Later commentators have suggested that there may be an underlying political symbolism as well, and that the three beasts may stand for Florence with her "Black" and "White" parties, the power of France, and the Guelf party as typically representative of these vices (*The Hell of Dante*, by A. J. Butler, 1892, p. 5, *note*).

Count Giovanni Marchetti degli Angelini (1790–1852), in his *Discorso . . . della prima e principale Allegoria del Poema di Dante*, contributed to an edition of *La Divina Commedia*, published at Bologna, 1819–21, i. 17–44, and reissued in *La Biografia di Dante . . .* 1822, v. 397, *sq.*, etc., argues in favour of a double symbolism. (According to a life of Marchetti, prefixed to his *Poesie*, 1878 [*Una notte di Dante, etc.*], he met Byron at Bologna in 1819, and made his acquaintance.)]

1. [For Vincenzo Monti (1754–1828), see letter to Murray, October 15, 1816 (*Letters*, 1899, iii. 377, *note* 3); and for Ippolito Pindemonte (1753–1828), see letter to Murray, June 4, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 127, *note* 4). In his *Essay on the Present Literature of Italy*, Hobhouse supplies critical notices of Pindemonte and Monti, *Historical Illustrations*, 1818, pp. 413–449. Cesare Arici, lawyer and poet, was born at Brescia, July 2, 1782. His works (Padua, 1858, 4 vols.) include his didactic poems, *La coltivazione degli Ulivi* (1805), *Il Corallo*, 1810, *La Pastorizia* (on sheep-farming), 1814, and a translation of the works of Virgil. He died in 1836. (See, for a long and sympathetic notice, Tipaldo's *Biografia degli Italiani Illustri*, iii. 491, *sq.*)]

THE PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIRST.

ONCE more in Man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 'twas forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft
Of the Immortal Vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep Gulf without repeal,
Where late my ears rung with the damnéd cries
Of Souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the Angelic race;
Midst whom my own bright Beatricē [1] blessed
My spirit with her light; and to the base
Of the Eternal Triad! first, last, best,[2]
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,

1. The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

2. [Compare—

"Within the deep and luminous subsistence
Of the High Light appeared to me three circles,
Of threefold colour and of one dimension,
And by the second seemed the first reflected
As Iris is by Iris, and the third
Seemed fire that equally from both is breathed. . . .
O Light Eterne, sole in thyself that dwellest."
Paradiso, XXXIII. 115–120, 124 (*Longfellow's Translation*).]

Unblasted by the Glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.[1]
Oh Beatricē! whose sweet limbs the sod
So long hath pressed, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure Seraph of my earliest love,
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in Heaven was but to meet
That without which my Soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wandered still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My Paradise had still been incomplete.[1]
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight
Thou wert my Life, the Essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of Love,[2] and bright
Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the World's war, and years, and banishment,
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;

1. *Star over star* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. "Ché sol per le belle' opre
Che sono in cielo, il sole e l'altre stelle,
Dentro da lor *si crede il Paradiso:*
Così se guardi fiso
Pensar ben dei, che ogni terren piacere.
[Si trova in lei, ma tu nol puoi vedere."]

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, Strophe third.

[Byron was mistaken in attributing these lines, which form part of a Canzone beginning "Io miro i crespi e gli biondi capegli," to Dante. Neither external nor internal evidence supports such an ascription. The Canzone is attributed in the MSS. either to Fazio degli Uberti, or to Bindo Borrichi da Siena, but was not assigned to Dante before 1518 (*Canzoni di Dante, etc.* [Colophon], Impresso in Milano per Augustino da Vimercato. . . . MCCCCCXVIII. . . .). See, too, *Il Canzoniere di Dante* . . . Fraticelli, Firenze, 1873, p. 240. From information kindly supplied by the Rev. Philip H. Wicksteed.]

2. ["Nine times already since my birth had the heaven of light returned to the selfsame point almost, as concerns its own revolution, when first the glorious Lady of my mind was made manifest to mine eyes; even she who was called Beatrice by many who knew not wherefore."—*La Vita Nuova*, § 2 (Translation by D. G. Rossetti, *Dante and his Circle*, 1892, p. 30).

"In reference to the meaning of the name, '*she who confers blessing*,' we learn from Boccaccio that this first meeting took place at a May Feast, given in the year 1274, by Folco Portinari, father of Beatrice . . . to which feast Dante accompanied his father, Alighiero Alighieri."—*Note* by D. G. Rossetti, *ibid.*, p. 30.]

For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain,—and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil,—they have not yet
Quenched the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the Sun, though not overcast, must set
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The World hath left me, what it found me, pure,
And if I have not gathered yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my Ambition's end or aim,
To add to the vain-glorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be classed
With conquerors, and Virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.
I would have had my Florence great and free;[1]
Oh Florence! Florence![2] unto me thou wast

1. "L'Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno
* * * * *
Cader tra' buoni è pur di lode degno."
Sonnet of Dante [Canzone xx. lines 76–80, *Opere di Dante*, 1897, p. 171]

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

2. [Compare—

"On the stone
Called Dante's,—a plain flat stone scarce discerned
From others in the pavement,—whereupon
He used to bring his quiet chair out, turned
To Brunelleschi's Church, and pour alone
The lava of his spirit when it burned:
It is not cold to-day. O passionate
Poor Dante, who, a banished Florentine,

Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over, "but thou wouldst not;" as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gathered thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherished thee was stirred
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.[1]
Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire.
The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer[i.]
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume
My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repealed her doom;
No,—she denied me what was mine—my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers—my tomb.
Too long her armèd wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,

i. *The ashes she would scatter* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

Didst sit austere at banquets of the great
And muse upon this far-off stone of thine,
And think how oft some passer used to wait
A moment, in the golden day's decline,
With 'Good night, dearest Dante!' Well, good night!"
Casa Guidi Windows, by E. B. Browning,
Poetical Works, 1866, iii. 259.]

1. "Ut si quis predictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*" Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him. The Latin is worthy of the sentence. [The decree (March 11, 1302) that he and his associates in exile should be burned, if they fell into the hands of their enemies, was first discovered in 1772 by the Conte Ludovico Savioli. Dante had been previously, January 27, fined eight thousand lire, and condemned to two years' banishment.]

The man who fought, toiled, travelled, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfilled, and saw
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness,
Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolonged to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet—yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatricē, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallowed by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh
And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,[1]
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffered more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still, have no repose
But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range

1. [At the end of the Social War (B.C. 88), when Sulla marched to Rome at the head of his army, and Marius was compelled to take flight, he "stripped himself, plunged into the bog (*Paludes Minturnenses*, near the mouth of the Liris), amidst thick water and mud. . . . They hauled him out naked and covered with dirt, and carried him to Minturnæ." Afterwards, when he sailed for Carthage, he had no sooner landed than he was ordered by the governor (Sextilius) to quit Africa. On his once more gaining the ascendancy and re-entering Rome (B.C. 87), he justified the massacre of Sulla's adherents in a blood-thirsty oration. Past ignominy and present triumph seem to have turned his head ("ut erat inter iram toleratæ fortunæ, et lætitiam emendatæ, parum compos animi").—Plut., "Marius," *apud* Langhorne, 1838, p. 304; Livii *Epit.*, lxxx. 28.]

O'er humbled heads and severed necks——Great God!
Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine Almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me,—be my Shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field—
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence,—I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious Vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wrecked
On the lone rock of desolate Despair,
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbéd annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,[1]
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be racked
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name,
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,

1. —— *their civic rage.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame
My mind down from its own infinity—
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripped from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—
To feel me in the solitude of kings
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal She,[1]

1. This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelph families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being "*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus,*" according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. "Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate, il più nobile filosofo che mai fusse, ebbe moglie e figliuoli e ufici nella Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotile che, etc., etc., ebbe due moglie in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone—e Seneca—ebbero moglie," etc., etc. [*Le Vite di Dante, etc.*, Firenze, 1677, pp. 22, 23]. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for anything I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates' Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy—Cato gave away his wife—of Varro's we know nothing—and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered and lived several years afterwards. But says Lionardo, "L'uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi." And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is "la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città."

[There is nothing in the *Divina Commedia*, or elsewhere in his writings, to justify the common belief that Dante was unhappily married, unless silence may be taken to imply dislike and alienation. It has been supposed that he alludes to his wife, Gemma Donati, in the *Vita Nuova*, § 36, "as a young and very beautiful lady, who was gazing upon me from a window, with a gaze full of pity," "who remembered me many times of my own most noble lady," whom he consented to serve "more because of her gentle goodness than from any choice" of his own (*Convito*, ii. 2. 7), but there are difficulties in the way of

Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry—this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,
They made an Exile—not a Slave of me.

accepting this theory. There is, however, not the slightest reason for believing that the words which he put into the mouth of Jacopo Rusticucci, "La fiera moglie più ch'altro, mi nuoce" ["and truly, my savage wife, more than aught else, doth harm me"] (*Inferno*, xvi. 45), were winged with any personal reminiscence or animosity. But with Byron (see his letter to Lady Byron, dated April 3, 1820, in which he quotes these lines "with intention" [*Letters*, 1901, v. 2]), as with Boccaccio, "the wish was father to the thought," and both were glad to quote Dante as a victim to matrimony.

Seven children were born to Dante and Gemma. Of these "his son Pietro, who wrote a commentary on the *Divina Commedia*, settled as judge in Verona. His daughter Beatrice lived as a nun in Ravenna" (*Dante*, by Oscar Browning, 1891, p. 47).]

CANTO THE SECOND.

The Spirit of the fervent days of Old,
When words were things that came to pass, and Thought
Flashed o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of Time which is to be,
The Chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great Seers of Israel wore within,
That Spirit was on them, and is on me,
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed
This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;
We can have but one Country, and even yet
Thou'rt mine—my bones shall be within thy breast,
My Soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide West;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which expressed
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realise a Poet's proudest dream,

And make thee Europe's Nightingale of Song;[1]
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.[i]
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan bard, the banished Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from Eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn Earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody Chaos yet expects Creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The Elements await but for the Word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,[2]
Thou, Italy! so fair that Paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:
Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Ploughed by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou, whose sky Heaven gilds[ii]
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;

i. —— *when matched with thine.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
ii. *From the world's harvest* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. [In his defence of the "mother-tongue" as a fitting vehicle for a commentary on his poetry, Dante argues "that natural love moves the lover principally to three things: the one is to exalt the loved object, the second is to be jealous thereof, the third is to defend it . . . and these three things made me adopt it, that is, our mother-tongue, which naturally and accidentally I love and have loved." Again, having laid down the premiss that "the magnanimous man always praises himself in his heart; and so the pusillanimous man always deems himself less than he is," he concludes, "Wherefore many on account of this vileness of mind, depreciate their native tongue, and applaud that of others; and all such as these are the abominable wicked men of Italy, who hold this precious mother-tongue in vile contempt, which, if it be vile in any case, is so only inasmuch as it sounds in the evil mouth of these adulterers."—*Il Convito*, caps. x., xi., translated by Elizabeth Price Sayer, 1887, pp. 34–40.]

2. [With the whole of this apostrophe to Italy, compare *Purgatorio*, vi. 76–127.]

Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,
And formed the Eternal City's ornaments
From spoils of Kings whom freemen overthrew;
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of Saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made [1]
Her home; thou, all which fondest Fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but portrayed
In feeble colours, when the eye—from the Alp
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 'twere, for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approached, and dearest were they free,
Thou—Thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank, and Hun [1]
Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,
Vowed to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey,
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh, and lap the gore

1. *Where earthly Glory first then Heavenly made.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
Where Glory first, and then Religion made.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Compare—

"The Goth, the Christian—Time—War—Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hilled City's pride."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza lxxx. lines 1, 2.
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 390, *note* 2.]

Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set;[1]
The chiefless army of the dead, which late
Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the Spoiler or the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never
Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance,
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye Rocks! Floods whelm them, and for ever!
Why sleep the idle Avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?

1. See "Sacco di Roma," generally attributed to Guicciardini [Francesco (1482–1540)]. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte.* [The original MS. of the latter work is preserved in the Royal Library at Paris. It is entitled, "Ragguaglio Storico di tutto l'occorso, giorno per giorno, nel Sacco di Roma dell' anno MDXXVII., scritto da Jacopo Buonaparte, Gentiluomo Samminiatese, che vi si trovo' presente." An edition of it was printed at Cologne, in 1756, to which is prefixed a genealogy of the Buonaparte family.

The "traitor Prince" was Charles IV., Connétable de Bourbon, Comte de Montpensier, born 1490, who was killed at the capture of Rome, May 6, 1527. "His death, far from restraining the ardour of the assailants [the Imperial troops, consisting of Germans and Spanish foot], increased it; and with the loss of about 1000 men, they entered and sacked the city. . . . The disorders committed by the soldiers were dreadful, and the booty they made incredible. They added insults to cruelty, and scoffs to rapaciousness. Upon the news of Bourbon's death, His Holiness, imagining that his troops, no longer animated by his implacable spirit, might listen to an accommodation, demanded a parley; but . . . neglected all means for defence. . . . Cardinals and bishops were ignominiously exposed upon asses with their legs and hands bound; and wealthy citizens . . . suspected of having secreted their effects . . . were tortured . . . to oblige them to make discoveries, . . . the booty . . . is said to have amounted to about two millions and a half of ducats."—*Mod. Univ. History*, xxxvi. 512.]

Over Cambyses' host[1] the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the Sea-waves' sway
Rolled over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why,[1.]
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye Men! Romans, who dare not die,
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye,
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,
And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, Nature's self detains the Victor's car,
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so; but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men:
Not so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail,—the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring
Against Oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still Division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the Stranger reaps the spoil.[2]

1. —— *and his phalanx—why.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. [Cambyses, the second King of Persia, who reigned B.C. 529–522, sent an army against the Ammonians, which perished in the sands.]

2. [The *Prophecy of Dante* was begun and finished before Byron took up the cause of Italian independence, or definitely threw in his lot with the Carbonari, but his intimacy with the Gambas, which dates from his migration to Ravenna in 1819, must from the first have brought him within the area of political upheaval and disturbance. A year after (April 16, 1820) he writes to Murray, "I have, besides, another reason for desiring you to be speedy, which is, that there is THAT brewing in Italy which will speedily cut off all security of communication. . . . I shall, if permitted by the natives, remain to see what will come of it, . . . for I shall think it by far the most interesting spectacle and moment in existence, to see the Italians send the Barbarians of all nations back to their own dens. I have lived long enough

Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops,
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes;
What is there wanting then to set thee free,
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her Sons, may do this with *one* deed——Unite.

among them to feel more for them as a nation than for any other people in existence: but they want Union [see line 145], and they want principle; and I doubt their success."—*Letters*, 1901, v. 8, *note* 1.]

CANTO THE THIRD.

From out the mass of never-dying ill,[i.]
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword,
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the Earth
And Ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,
Spread like a banner at the gate of Heaven,
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
And Italy, the martyred nation's gore,
Will not in vain arise to where belongs[ii.]
Omnipotence and Mercy evermore:
Like to a harpstring stricken by the wind,
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
The Seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To Sense and Suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my Country! whom before, as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre

i. —— *of long-enduring ill.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. —— *the martyred country's gore*
Will not in vain arise to whom belongs.—[*MS. erased.*]

And melancholy gift high Powers allow
To read the future: and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!
I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.
A Spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My Heart shall be poured over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of Sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight:
And from thine ashes boundless Spirits rise
To give thee honour, and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learned, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as Summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave,[1]
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name;[2]

1. Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecuccoli.

[Alessandro Farnese, Duke of Parma (1546–1592), recovered the Southern Netherlands for Spain, 1578–79, made Henry IV. raise the siege of Paris, 1590, etc.

Ambrogio, Marchese di Spinola (1569–1630), a Maltese by birth, entered the Spanish service 1602, took Ostend 1604, invested Bergen-op-Zoom, etc.

Ferdinando Francesco dagli Avalos, Marquis of Pescara (1496–1525), took Milan November 19, 1521, fought at Lodi, etc., was wounded at the battle of Padua, February 24, 1525. He was the husband of Vittoria Colonna, and when he was in captivity at Ravenna wrote some verses in her honour.

François Eugene (1663–1736), Prince of Savoy-Carignan, defeated the French at Turin, 1706, and (with Marlborough) at Malplaquet, 1709; the Turks at Peterwardein, 1716, etc.

Raimondo Montecuccoli, a Modenese (1608–1680), defeated the Turks at St. Gothard in 1664, and in 1675–6 commanded on the Rhine, and out-generalled Turenne and the Prince de Condé.]

2. Columbus, Americus Vespusius, Sebastian Cabot.

[Christopher Columbus (circ. 1430–1506), a Genoese, discovered mainland of America, 1498; Amerigo Vespucci (1451–1512), a Florentine, explored coasts of America, 1497–1504; Sebastian Cabot (1477–1557), son of Giovanni Cabotto or Gavotto, a Venetian, discovered coasts of Labrador, etc., June, 1497.]

For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee—
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The Being—and even yet he may be born—
The mortal Saviour who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet Sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced,
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By Servitude, and have the mind in prison.[1]
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe[i.]
Some voices shall be heard, and Earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader: the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,[ii.]
And raise their notes as natural and high;
Tuneful shall be their numbers; they shall sing
Many of Love, and some of Liberty,
But few shall soar upon that Eagle's wing,
And look in the Sun's face, with Eagle's gaze,
All free and fearless as the feathered King,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
Sublime shall lavished be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of Praise!
And language, eloquently false, evince[iii.]
The harlotry of Genius, which, like Beauty,[iv.]

i. *Yet through this many-yeared eclipse of Woe.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
Yet through this murky interreign of Woe.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Which choirs the birds to song* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
iii. *And Pearls flung down to regal Swine evince.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
iv. *The whoredom of high Genius* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. [Compare—

"Ah! servile Italy, grief's hostelry!
A ship without a pilot in great tempest!"
Purgatorio, vi. 76, 77.]

Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.[1]
He who once enters in a Tyrant's hall [1] [2]
As guest is slave—his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chain enthral
A captive, sees his half of Manhood gone [3]—
The Soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—
How servile is the task to please alone!
To smooth the verse to suit his Sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force, or forge fit argument of Song!
Thus trammelled, thus condemned to Flattery's trebles,
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In's mouth, lest Truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonneteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,

i. *And prides itself in prostituted duty.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. [Alfieri, in his *Autobiography* . . . (1845, *Period III.* chap. viii. p. 92) notes and deprecates the servile manner in which Metastasio went on his knees before Maria Theresa in the Imperial gardens of Schoenbrunnen.]

2. A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia [daughter of Metellus Scipio, and widow of P. Crassus] on entering the boat in which he was slain. [The verse, or verses, are said to be by Sophocles, and are quoted by Plutarch, in his Life of Pompey, c. 78, *Vitæ*, 1814, vii. 159. They run thus—

"Οστις γὰρ ὡς τύραννον ἐμπορεύεται,
Κείνου ἐστὶ δοῦλος, κἂν ἐλεύθερος μόλῃ.

("Seek'st thou a tyrant's door? then farewell, freedom!
Though *free* as air before.")

Vide Incert. Fab. Fragm., No. 789, *Trag. Græc. Fragm.*, A. Nauck, 1889, p. 316.]

3. The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

[Ἥμισυ γάρ τ' ἀρετῆς ἀποαίνυται εὐρύοπα Ζεύς
Ἀνέρος, εὖτ' ἂν μιν κατὰ δούλιον ἦμαρ ἕλῃσιν.
Odyssey, xvii. 322, 323.]

And he, their Prince, shall rank among my peers,[1]
  And Love shall be his torment; but his grief
  Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief
  Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song
  Of Freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
  The banks of Po two greater still than he;
  The World which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.
  The first will make an epoch with his lyre,
  And fill the earth with feats of Chivalry:[2]
His Fancy like a rainbow, and his Fire,
  Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his Thought
  Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire;
Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
  Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
  And Art itself seem into Nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
  The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
  Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of Arms, and Christian blood
  Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
  Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
  Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
  And pious, and the strife of Hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave
  The red-cross banners where the first red Cross
  Was crimsoned from His veins who died to save,[i.]
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
  Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame
  Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of Courts would slide o'er his forgotten name

i. *Was crimsoned with his veins who died to save,*
Shall be his glorious argument ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. Petrarch. [Dante died September 14, 1321, when Petrarch, born July 20, 1304, had entered his eighteenth year.]

2. [Historical events may be thrown into the form of prophecy with some security, but not so the critical opinions of the *soi-disant* prophet. If Byron had lived half a century later, he might have placed Ariosto and Tasso after and not before Petrarch.]

And call Captivity a kindness—meant
To shield him from insanity or shame—
Such shall be his meek guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him well!
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,[1]
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man who with a lover's eye
Will look on Earth and Heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery,
As poor a thing as e'er was spawned to reign,[2]
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not Love in vain
Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume[3]
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind World, which scarce will yield a tear,
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine Poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatched by time; not Hellas can unroll
Through her Olympiads two such names, though one[4]
Of hers be mighty;—and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the Sun?[5]

1. [See the Introduction to the *Lament of Tasso*, *ante*, p. 139, and *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xxxvi. line 2, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 355, *note* 1.]

2. [Alfonso d'Este (II.), Duke of Ferrara, died 1597.]

3. [Compare the opening lines of the *Orlando Furioso*—

"Le Donne, i Cavalier'! l'arme, gli amori,
Le Cortesie, l'audaci imprese io canto."

See *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanzas xl., xli., *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 359, 360, *note* 1.]

4. [The sense is, "Ariosto may be matched with, perhaps excelled by, Homer; but where is the Greek poet to set on the same pedestal with Tasso?"]

5. [Compare *Churchill's Grave*, lines 15-19—

"And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality, and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon, and so successless?"

Vide ante, p. 47.]

Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
The electric blood with which their arteries run,[1]
Their body's self turned soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scattered? Yes, and it must be;
For, formed of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of Paradise [1] but long to flee
Back to their native mansion, soon they find
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,
And die or are degraded; for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture Passions flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear; [2]
And when, at length, the wingéd wanderers stoop,
Then is the Prey-birds' triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpowered at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouched who learned to bear,
Some whom no Power could ever force to droop,

1. *The* { *winged* / *lightning* } *blood* ——.—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

1. [Compare—

"For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise."

Kubla Khan, lines 52, 53,
Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge, 1893, p. 94.]

2. [Compare—

"By our own spirits are we deified:
We Poets in our youth begin in gladness;
But thereof come in the end despondency and madness."

Resolution and Independence, vii. lines 5–7,
Wordsworth's *Poetical Works*, 1889, p. 175.

Compare, too, Moore's fine apology for Byron's failure to submit to the yoke of matrimony, "and to live happily ever afterwards"—

"But it is the cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty that, more than anything, tend to wean the man of genius from actual life, and, by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings soon accustom him to consider all that is beneath this high standard unworthy of his care; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled as the fancy warms, it too often happens that, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the practice of them."—*Life*, p. 268.]

Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That Destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unblessed;
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the Volcano's fierce eruptive crest,
Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,
While the scorched mountain, from whose burning breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the Hell from whence it sprung,
The Hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

CANTO THE FOURTH.

MANY are Poets who have never penned
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compressed
The God within them, and rejoined the stars
Unlaurelled upon earth, but far more blessed
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of Passion, and their frailties linked to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are Poets but without the name;
For what is Poesy but to create,
From overfeeling, Good or Ill, and aim [1]
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,[2]
Bestowing fire from Heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavished his high gift in vain,

1. [So too Wordsworth, in his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800); "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."]

2. [Compare—

"Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness . . .
But baffled as thou wert from high . . .
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals."

Prometheus, iii. lines 35, *seq.*; *vide ante*, p. 50.

Compare, too, the *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*, stanza xvi. *var.* ii.—

"He suffered for kind acts to men."

Poetical Works, 1900, iii. 312.]

Lies chained to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it: we can bear.—But thus all they
Whose Intellect is an o'ermastering Power
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled Marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvass till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to Idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high Heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated:[1] and the line
Of Poesy, which peoples but the air
With Thought and Beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas!
Despair and Genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give
New wonders to the World; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar
A Dome,[2] its image, while the base expands

1. ["Transfigurate," whence "transfiguration," is derived from the Latin *transfiguro*, found in Suetonius and Quintilian. Byron may have thought to anglicize the Italian *trasfigurarsi*.]

2. The Cupola of St. Peter's.

[Michel Angelo, then in his seventy-second year, received the appointment of architect of St. Peter's from Pope Paul III. He began the dome on a different plan from that of the first architect, Bramante, "declaring that he would raise the Pantheon in the air." The drum of the dome was constructed in his life-time, but for more than twenty-four years after his death (1563), the cupola remained untouched, and

Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair,
And lay their sins at this huge gate of Heaven.
And the bold Architect[1] unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all Arts shall acknowledge as their Lord,
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew,[2] at whose word

it was not till 1590, in the pontificate of Sixtus V., that the dome itself was completed. The ball and cross were placed on the summit in November, 1593.—*Handbook of Rome*, p. 239.

Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza cliii. line 1, *Poetical Works*, 1892, ii. 440, 441, *note* 2.]

1. ["Yet, however unequal I feel myself to that attempt, were I now to begin the world again, I would tread in the steps of that great master [Michel Angelo]. To kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man."—*Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1884, p. 289.]

2. The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

[Michel Angelo's Moses is near the end of the right aisle of the Church of S. Pietro-in-Vincoli.]

"SONETTO

"*Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.*

"Chi è costui, che in sì gran pietra scolto,
Siede gigante, e le più illustri, e conte
Opre dell' arte avanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbra sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest' è Mosè; ben me 'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte;
Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea dal monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
Tal' era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese, a se d' intorno; e tale
Quando il Mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi, sue turbe, un rio vitello alzaste?
Alzata aveste immago a questa eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui."
[*Scelta di Sonetti . . . del Gobbi*, 1709, iii. 216.]

["And who is he that, shaped in sculptured stone
Sits giant-like? stern monument of art
Unparalleled, while language seems to start
From his prompt lips, and we his precepts own?
—'Tis Moses; by his beard's thick honours known,
And the twin beams that from his temples dart;
'Tis Moses; seated on the mount apart,
Whilst yet the Godhead o'er his features shone.

Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,[1]
Or hues of Hell be by his pencil poured
Over the damned before the Judgement-throne,[1]
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown—
The Stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me[2]
The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the Empire of Eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The Genius of my Country shall arise,
A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,

1. —— *from whose word*
{ *Israel took God, pronounce the law in stone.*
{ *Israel left Egypt, cleave the sea in stone.—*
[*MS. Alternative readings.*]

Such once he looked, when Ocean's sounding wave
Suspended hung, and such amidst the storm,
When o'er his foes the refluent waters roared.
An idol calf his followers did engrave:
But had they raised this awe-commanding form,
Then had they with less guilt their work adored."
Rogers.]

1. The Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel.

["It is obvious, throughout his [Michel Angelo's] works, that the poetical mind of the latter [Dante] influenced his feelings. The Demons in the Last Judgment . . . may find a prototype in *La Divina Commedia*. The figures rising from the grave mark his study of *L'Inferno, e Il Purgatorio;* and the subject of the Brazen Serpent, in the Sistine Chapel, must remind every reader of Canto XXV. dell' *Inferno*."—*Life of Michael Angelo*, by R. Duppa, 1856, p. 120.]

2. I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where,) that Dante was so great a favourite of Michael Angelo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia: but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

[Michel Angelo's copy of Dante, says Duppa (*ibid.*, and *note* 1), "was a large folio, with Landino's commentary; and upon the broad margin of the leaves he designed with a pen and ink, all the interesting subjects. This book was possessed by Antonio Montanti, a sculptor and architect in Florence, who, being appointed architect to St. Peter's, removed to Rome, and shipped his . . . effects at Leghorn for Cività Vecchia, among which was this edition of Dante. In the voyage the vessel foundered at sea, and it was unfortunately lost in the wreck."]

Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Weaned for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvass or on stone; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compelled to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy;
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants, who but take her for a toy,
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
Her charms to Pontiffs proud,[1] who but employ
The man of Genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot.
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,
But free; who sweats for Monarchs is no more
Than the gilt Chamberlain, who, clothed and feed,
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power[2]
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine?
And how is it that they, the Sons of Fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,
Must pass their days in penury or pain,

1. See the treatment of Michel Angelo by Julius II., and his neglect by Leo X. [Julius II. encouraged his attendance at the Vatican, but one morning he was stopped by the chamberlain in waiting, who said, "I have an order not to let you enter." Michel Angelo, indignant at the insult, left Rome that very evening. Though Julius despatched five couriers to bring him back, it was some months before he returned. Even a letter (July 8, 1506), in which the Pope promised his "dearly beloved Michel Angelo" that he should not be touched nor offended, but be "reinstated in the apostolic grace," met with no response. It was this quarrel with Julius II. which prevented the completion of the sepulchral monument. The "Moses" and the figures supposed to represent the Active and the Contemplative Life, and three Caryatides (since removed) represent the whole of the original design, "a parallelogram surmounted with forty statues, and covered with reliefs and other ornaments."—See Duppa's *Life, etc.*, 1856, pp. 33, 34, and *Handbook of Rome*, p. 133.]

2. [Compare *Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1, lines 191, 192.]

Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?
Or if their Destiny be born aloof
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of Passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee; but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries which every year
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear—
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to Kings,
And Demagogues yield to them but in date,
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things,
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,[1]
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,
And the worst Despot's far less human ape.
Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearned, as the captive toiling at escape,
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,[2]

1. [Compare—

> "I fled, and cried out Death . . .
> I fled, but he pursued, (though more, it seems,
> Inflamed with lust than rage), and swifter far,
> Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
> And in embraces forcible and foul,
> Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
> These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
> Surround me."
>
> *Paradise Lost*, book ii. lines 787–796.]

2. [In his *Convito*, Dante speaks of his banishment, and the poverty and distress which attended it, in very affecting terms. "Ah! would it had pleased the Dispenser of all things that this excuse had never been needed; that neither others had done me wrong, nor myself undergone penalty undeservedly,—the penalty, I say, of exile and of poverty. For it pleased the citizens of the fairest and most renowned daughter of Rome—Florence—to cast me out of her most sweet bosom,

Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's [1] verge for bars,[i.]
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth
Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were hers,
His Country's, and might die where he had birth—
Florence! when this lone Spirit shall return
To kindred Spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honour with an empty urn [2]
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—Alas! 140
"What have I done to thee, my People?" [3] Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of Man's common malice, for
All that a citizen could be I was—
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war—
And for this thou hast warred with me.—'Tis done:

i. —— *and the Horizon for bars.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]

where I was born and bred, and passed half of the life of man, and in which, with her good leave, I still desire with all my heart to repose my weary spirit, and finish the days allotted me; and so I have wandered in almost every place to which our language extends, a stranger, almost a beggar, exposing against my will the wounds given me by fortune, too often unjustly imputed to the sufferer's fault. Truly I have been a vessel without sail and without rudder, driven about upon different ports and shores by the dry wind that springs out of dolorous poverty; and hence have I appeared vile in the eyes of many, who, perhaps, by some better report, had conceived of me a different impression, and in whose sight not only has my person become thus debased, but an unworthy opinion created of everything which I did, or which I had to do."—*Il Convito*, book i. chap. iii., translated by Leigh Hunt, *Stories from the Italian Poets*, 1846, i. 22, 23.]

1. What is Horizon's quantity? Horīzon, or Horĭzon? adopt accordingly.—[B.]

2. [Compare—

"Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza lvii.,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 371, *note* 1.

"Bètween the second and third chapels [in the nave of Santa Croce at Florence] is the colossal monument to Dante, by Ricci . . . raised by subscription in 1829. The inscription, '*A majoribus ter frustra decretum*,' refers to the successive efforts of the Florentines to recover his remains, and raise a monument to their great countryman."—*Handbook, Central Italy*, p. 32.]

3. "E scrisse più volte non solamente a' particolari Cittadini del Reggimento, ma ancora al Popolo; e intra l' altre un' Epistola assai lunga che incomincia: '*Populo mee* (sic), *quid feci tibi?*'"—*Le Vite di Dante, etc., scritte da Lionardo Aretino*, 1672, p. 47.

I may not overleap the eternal bar [1]
Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding with the dark eye of a Seer
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear;
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.

Ravenna, 1819.

1. [About the year 1316 his friends obtained his restoration to his country and his possessions, on condition that he should pay a certain sum of money, and, entering a church, avow himself guilty, and ask pardon of the republic.

The following was his answer to a religious, who appears to have been one of his kinsmen: "From your letter, which I received with due respect and affection, I observe how much you have at heart my restoration to my country. I am bound to you the more gratefully inasmuch as an exile rarely finds a friend. But, after mature consideration, I must, by my answer, disappoint the writers of some little minds. . . . Your nephew and mine has written to me . . . that . . . I am allowed to return to Florence, provided I pay a certain sum of money, and submit to the humiliation of asking and receiving absolution. . . . Is such an invitation then to return to his country glorious to d. all. after suffering in exile almost fifteen years? Is it thus, then, they would recompense innocence which all the world knows, and the labour and fatigue of unremitting study? Far from the man who is familiar with philosophy, be the senseless baseness of a heart of earth, that could imitate the infamy of some others, by offering himself up as it were in chains. Far from the man who cries aloud for justice, this compromise, by his money, with his persecutors! No, my Father, this is not the way that shall lead me back to my country. I will return with hasty steps, if you or any other can open to me a way that shall not derogate from the fame and honour of d.; but if by no such way Florence can be entered, then Florence I shall never enter. What! shall I not every where enjoy the light of the sun and the stars? and may I not seek and contemplate, in every corner of the earth, under the canopy of heaven, consoling and delightful truth, without first rendering myself inglorious, nay infamous, to the people and republic of Florence? Bread, I hope, will not fail me."—*Epistola IX. Amico Florentino: Opere di Dante*, 1897, p. 413.]

THE MORGANTE MAGGIORE

OF PULCI.

INTRODUCTION TO THE *MORGANTE MAGGIORE*.

It is possible that Byron began his translation of the First Canto of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore* (so called to distinguish the entire poem of twenty-eight cantos from the lesser *Morgante* [or, to coin a title, "*Morganid*"] which was published separately) in the late autumn of 1819, before he had left Venice (see his letter to Bankes, February 19, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 403). It is certain that it was finished at Ravenna during the first week of his "domestication" in the Palazzo Guiccioli (Letters to Murray, February 7, February 21, 1820). He took a deal of pains with his self-imposed task, "servilely translating stanza from stanza, and line from line, two octaves every night;" and when the first canto was finished he was naturally and reasonably proud of his achievement. More than two years had elapsed since Frere's *Whistlecraft* had begotten *Beppo*, and in the interval he had written four cantos of *Don Juan*, outstripping his "immediate model," and equalling if not surpassing his model's parents and precursors, the masters of "narrative romantic poetry among the Italians."

In attempting this translation—something, as he once said of his Armenian studies, "craggy for his mind to break upon" (Letter to Moore, December 5, 1816, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 10)—Byron believed that he was working upon virgin soil. He had read, as he admits in his "Advertisement," John Herman Merivale's poem, *Orlando in Roncesvalles*, which is founded upon the *Morgante Maggiore;* but he does not seem to have been aware that many years before (1806, 1807) the same writer (one of the "associate bards") had published in the *Monthly Magazine* (May, July, 1806, etc., *vide ante* Introduction to *Beppo*, p. 156) a series of translations of selected passages of the poem. There is no resemblance whatever between Byron's laboured and faithful rendering of the text, and Merivale's far more readable

paraphrase, and it is evident that if these selections ever passed before his eyes, they had left no impression on his memory. He was drawn to the task partly on account of its difficulty, but chiefly because in Pulci he recognized a kindred spirit who suggested and compelled a fresh and final dedication of his genius to the humorous epopee. The translation was an act of devotion, the offering of a disciple to a master.

"The apparent contradictions of the *Morgante Maggiore* . . . the brusque transition from piety to ribaldry, from pathos to satire," the paradoxical union of persiflage with gravity, a confession of faith alternating with a profession of mockery and profanity, have puzzled and confounded more than one student and interpreter. An intimate knowledge of the history, the literature, the art, the manners and passions of the times has enabled one of his latest critics and translators, John Addington Symonds, to come as near as may be to explaining the contradictions ; but the essential quality of Pulci's humour eludes analysis.

We know that the poem itself, as Pio Rajna has shown, "the *rifacimento* of two earlier popular poems," was written to amuse Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo de' Medici, and that it was recited, canto by canto, in the presence of such guests as Poliziano, Ficino, and Michelangelo Buonarotti ; but how "it struck these contemporaries," and whether a subtler instinct permitted them to untwist the strands and to appraise the component parts at their precise ethical and spiritual value, are questions for the exercise of the critical imagination. That which attracted Byron to Pulci's writings was, no doubt, the co-presence of faith, a certain *simplicity* of faith, with an audacious and even outrageous handling of the objects of faith, combined with a facile and wanton alternation of romantic passion with a cynical mockery of whatsoever things are sober and venerable. *Don Juan* and the *Vision of Judgment* owe their existence to the *Morgante Maggiore.*

The MS. of the translation of Canto I. was despatched to England, February 28, 1820. It is evident (see Letters, March 29, April 23, May 18, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 425, 1901, v. 17, 21) that Murray looked coldly on Byron's "masterpiece" from the first. It was certain that any new work by the author of *Don Juan* would be subjected to the severest and most hostile scrutiny, and it was doubtful if a translation of part of an obscure and difficult poem, vaguely supposed to be coarse and irreligious, would meet with even a tolerable measure of success. At any rate, in spite of many inquiries and much vaunting of its excellence (see Letters, June 29, September 12, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v.

314, 362), the MS. remained for more than two years in Murray's hands, and it was not until other arrangements came into force that the translation of the First Canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* appeared in the fourth and last number of *The Liberal*, which was issued (by John Hunt) July 30, 1823.[1]

For critical estimates of Luigi Pulci and the *Morgante Maggiore*, see an article (*Quarterly Review*, April, 1819, vol. xxi. pp. 486–556), by Ugo Foscolo, entitled "Narrative and Romantic Poems of the Italians;" *Preface* to the *Orlando Innamorato of Boiardo*, by A. Panizzi, 1830, i. 190–302; *Poems Original and Translated*, by J. H. Merivale, 1838, ii. 1–43; *Stories of the Italian Poets*, by J. H. Leigh Hunt, 1846, i. 283–314; *Renaissance in Italy*, by J. A. Symonds, 1881, iv. 431, 456, and for translations of the *Morgante Maggiore*, *vide ibid.*, Appendix V. pp. 543–560; and *Italian Literature*, by R. Garnett, C.B., LL.D., 1898, pp. 128–131.

1. [An abstract, in prose, of the First Canto of the *Morgante Maggiore* was published in Leigh Hunt's *Indicator*, March 14, 1821, but there is nothing to show that the author had any knowledge of Byron's already completed metrical version.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto.[1] The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one; and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr. Merivale, are to be traced to the same source.[2] It has never yet been decided entirely whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove

1. [Matteo Maria Bojardo (1434–1494) published his *Orlando Innamorato* in 1486; Lodovico Ariosto (1474–1533) published the *Orlando Furioso* in 1516. A first edition of Cantos I.–XXV. of Luigi Pulci's (1431–1487) *Il Morgante Maggiore* was printed surreptitiously by Luca Veneziano in 1481. Francesco Berni, who recast the *Orlando Innamorato*, was born circ. 1490, and died in 1536.]

2. [John Hermann Merivale (1779–1844), the father of Charles Merivale, the historian (Dean of Ely, 1869), and of Herman, Under-Secretary for India, published his *Orlando in Roncesvalles* in 1814.]

that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas,[1] Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild,—or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the "Tales of my Landlord."

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names, as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganellone; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, etc., as it suits his convenience; so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader, on comparing it with the original, is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well of those recent experiments in poetry in England which have been already mentioned.

1. [Parson Adams and Barnabas are characters in *Joseph Andrews*; Thwackum and Supple, in *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling.*]

THE MORGANTE MAGGIORE.[1]

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

In the beginning was the Word next God;
God was the Word, the Word no less was He:

1. [Byron insisted, in the first place with Murray (February 7, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 402), and afterwards, no doubt, with the Hunts, that his translation of the *Morgante Maggiore* should be "put by the original, stanza for stanza, and verse for verse." In the present issue a few stanzas are inserted for purposes of comparison, but it has not been thought necessary to reprint the whole of the Canto.

"IL MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

ARGOMENTO.

"Vivendo Carlo Magno Imperadore
Co' Paladini in festa e in allegria,
Orlando contra Gano traditore
S'adira, e parte verso Pagania:
Giunge a un deserto, e del bestial furore
Di tre giganti salva una badia,
Che due n'uccide, e con Morgante elegge,
Di buon sozio e d'amico usar la legge."

CANTO PRIMO.

I.

"In principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio;
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e 'l Verbo lui:
Quest' era nel principio, al parer mio;
E nulla si può far sanza costui:

This was in the beginning, to my mode
Of thinking, and without Him nought could be:
Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
One only, to be my companion, who
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key
Of Heaven, and Hell, and every thing beside,
The day thy Gabriel said "All hail!" to thee,
Since to thy servants Pity's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,

Però, giusto Signor benigno e pio,
Mandami solo un de gli angeli tui,
Che m'accompagni, e rechimi a memoria
Una famosa antica e degna storia.

II.

"E tu, Vergine, figlia, e madre, e sposa,
Di quel Signor, che ti dette le chiave
Del cielo e dell' abisso, e d' ogni cosa,
Quel dì che Gabriel tuo ti disse Ave!
Perchè tu se' de' tuo' servi pietosa,
Con dolce rime, e stil grato e soave,
Ajuta i versi miei benignamente,
E'nsino al fine allumina la mente.

III.

"Era nel tempo, quando Filomena
Colla sorella si lamenta e plora,
Che si ricorda di sua antica pena,
E pe' boschetti le ninfe innamora,
E Febo il carro temperato mena,
Che 'l suo Fetonte l'ammaestra ancora;
Ed appariva appunto all' orizzonte,
Tal che Titon si graffiava la fronte:

IV.

"Quand'io varai la mia barchetta, prima
Per ubbidir chi sempre ubbidir debbe
La mente, e faticarsi in prosa e in rima,
E del mio Carlo Imperador m'increbbe;
Che so quanti la penna ha posto in cima,
Che tutti la sua gloria prevarrebbe:
E stata quella istoria, a quel ch'i' veggio,
Di Carlo male intesa, e scritta peggio."]

Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III.

'Twas in the season when sad Philomel[1]
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and
Deplores the ancient woes which both befel,
And makes the nymphs enamoured, to the hand
Of Phaëton, by Phœbus loved so well,
His car (but tempered by his sire's command)
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now
Appeared, so that Tithonus scratched his brow:

IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find
By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,
For all that I can see in prose or verse,
Have understood Charles badly, and wrote worse.

V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,[2]
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer

1. [Philomela and Procne were daughters of Pandion, King of Attica. Tereus, son of Ares, wedded Procne, and, after the birth of her son Itys, concealed his wife in the country, with a view to dishonouring Philomela, on the plea of her sister's death. Procne discovered the plot, killed her babe, and served up his flesh in a dish for her husband's dinner. The sisters fled, and when Tereus pursued them with an axe they besought the gods to change them into birds. Thereupon Procne became a swallow, and Philomela a nightingale. So Hyginus, *Fabulæ*, xlv.; but there are other versions of Philomela's woes.]

2. [In the first edition of the *Morgante Maggiore* (Firenze, 1482 [*B. M.* G. 10834]), which is said (*vide* the *colophon*) to have been issued "under the correction of the author, line 2 of this stanza runs thus: "*comegliebbe ũ ormãno el suo turpino;*" and, apparently, it was not till 1518 (Milano, by Zarotti) that *Pipino* was substituted for *Turpino*. Leonardo Bruni, surnamed Aretino (1369–1444), in his *Istoria Fiorentina* (1861, pp. 43, 47), commemorates the imperial magnificence of *Carlo Magno*, and speaks of his benefactions to the Church, but does not—in that work, at any rate—mention his biographers. It is possible

Of genius quick, and diligently steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,
And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,
Certes, far more than yet is said or thought.

VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,[1]
The abbey, no great way from Manopell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,
Because of the great battle in which fell
A pagan king, according to the story,
And felon people whom Charles sent to Hell:
And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's[2] would seem few, if any.

VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,[3]
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,
All proper customs and true courtesies:
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

that if Pulci or Bruni had read Eginhard, they thought that his chronicle was derogatory to Charlemagne. (See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1825, iii. 376, *note* 1, and Hallam's *Europe during the Middle Ages*, 1868, p. 16, *note* 3; *et vide post*, p. 309.)]

1. [For an account of the Benedictine Monastery of San Liberatore alla Majella, which lies to the south of Manoppello (eight miles south-west of Chieto, in the Abruzzi), see *Monumenti Storici ed. Artistici degli Abruzzi*, by V. Bindi, Naples, 1889, Part I. (Testo), pp. 655, *sq.* The abbey is in a ruinous condition, but on the walls of "*un ampio porticato*," there is still to be seen a fresco of Charlemagne, holding in his hands the deed of gift of the Abbey lands.]

2. [That is, the valley of Jehoshaphat, the "valley where Jehovah judges" (see Joel iii. 2–12); and, hence, a favourite burial-ground of Jews and Moslems.]

3. [The text as it stands is meaningless. Probably Byron wrote "dost arise." The reference is no doubt to the supposed restoration of Florence by Charlemagne.]

VIII.

Twelve Paladins had Charles in court, of whom
The wisest and most famous was Orlando;
Him traitor Gan [1] conducted to the tomb
In Roncesvalles, as the villain planned too,
While the horn rang so loud, and knelled the doom
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do:
And Dante in his comedy has given
To him a happy seat with Charles in Heaven.[2]

IX.

'Twas Christmas-day; in Paris all his court
Charles held; the Chief, I say, Orlando was,
The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass
In festival and in triumphal sport,
The much-renowned St. Dennis being the cause;
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,
And gentle Belinghieri too came there:

X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salamone,
Walter of Lion's Mount, and Baldovin,
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
Were there, exciting too much gladness in
The son of Pepin:—when his knights came hither,
He groaned with joy to see them altogether.

XI.

But watchful Fortune, lurking, takes good heed
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.

1. ["The *Morgante* is in truth the epic of treason, and the character of Gano, as an accomplished but not utterly abandoned Judas, is admirably sustained throughout."—*Renaissance in Italy*, 1881, iv. 444.]

2. ["Così per Carlo Magno e per Orlando,
Due ne seguì lo mio attento sguardo,
Com' occhio segue suo falcon volando."
Del Paradiso, Canto XVIII. lines 43–45.]

While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing;
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king
One day he openly began to say,
"Orlando must we always then obey?

XII.

"A thousand times I've been about to say,
Orlando too presumptuously goes on;
Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,
Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,
Each have to honour thee and to obey;
But he has too much credit near the throne,
Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided
By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII.

"And even at Aspramont thou didst begin
To let him know he was a gallant knight,
And by the fount did much the day to win;
But I know *who* that day had won the fight
If it had not for good Gherardo been;
The victory was Almonte's else; his sight
He kept upon the standard—and the laurels,
In fact and fairness, are his earning, Charles!

XIV.

"If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
When there advanced the nations out of Spain
The Christian cause had suffered shamefully,
Had not his valour driven them back again.
Best speak the truth when there's a reason why:
Know then, oh Emperor! that all complain:
As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
O'er which I crossed with two and sixty counts.

XV.

"'Tis fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,
So that each here may have his proper part,

For the whole court is more or less in grief:
Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in heart?"
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

XVI.

And with the sword he would have murdered Gan,
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,
And thus at length they separated were.
Orlando angry too with Carloman,
Wanted but little to have slain him there;
Then forth alone from Paris went the Chief,
And burst and maddened with disdain and grief.

XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,
And on towards Brara pricked him o'er the plain;
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle
Stretched forth her arms to clasp her lord again:
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
As "Welcome, my Orlando, home," she said,
Raised up his sword to smite her on the head.

XVIII.

Like him a Fury counsels, his revenge
On Gan in that rash act he seemed to take,
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange;
But soon Orlando found himself awake;
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake
Of every thing which passed without demur,
And then reposed himself some days with her.

XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
As far as pagan countries roamed astray,

And while he rode, yet still at every pace
The traitor Gan remembered by the way;
And wandering on in error a long space,
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands, he found,
Which formed the Christian's and the Pagan's bound.

XX.

The Abbot was called Clermont, and by blood
Descended from Angrante: under cover
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,
But certain savage giants looked him over;
One Passamont was foremost of the brood,
And Alabaster and Morgante hover
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw
In daily jeopardy the place below.

XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood;
Orlando knocked, but none would ope, before
Unto the Prior it at length seemed good;
Entered, he said that he was taught to adore
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,
And was baptized a Christian; and then showed
How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII.

Said the Abbot, "You are welcome; what is mine
We give you freely, since that you believe
With us in Mary Mother's Son divine;
And that you may not, Cavalier, conceive
The cause of our delay to let you in
To be rusticity, you shall receive
The reason why our gate was barred to you:
Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII.

"When hither to inhabit first we came
These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,

As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
They seemed to promise an asylum sure:
From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,
'Twas fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
But now, if here we'd stay, we needs must guard
Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

XXIV.

"These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch;
For late there have appeared three giants rough,
What nation or what kingdom bore the batch
I know not, but they are all of savage stuff;
When Force and Malice with some genius match,
You know, they can do all—*we* are not enough:
And these so much our orisons derange,
I know not what to do, till matters change.

XXV.

"Our ancient fathers, living the desert in,
For just and holy works were duly fed;
Think not they lived on locusts sole, 'tis certain
That manna was rained down from heaven instead;
But here 'tis fit we keep on the alert in
Our bounds, or taste the stones showered down for bread,
From off yon mountain daily raining faster,
And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

XXVI.

"The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far; he
Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,
And flings them, our community to bury;
And all that I can do but more provokes."
While thus they parley in the cemetery,
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,
Which nearly crushed Rondell, came tumbling over,
So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII.

"For God-sake, Cavalier, come in with speed;
The manna's falling now," the Abbot cried.

"This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,
Dear Abbot," Roland unto him replied,
"Of restiveness he'd cure him had he need;
That stone seems with good will and aim applied."
The holy father said, "I don't deceive;
They'll one day fling the mountain, I believe."

XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
And also made a breakfast of his own;
"Abbot," he said, "I want to find that fellow
Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone."
Said the abbot, "Let not my advice seem shallow;
As to a brother dear I speak alone;
I would dissuade you, Baron, from this strife,
As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX.

"That Passamont has in his hand three darts—
Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must:
You know that giants have much stouter hearts
Than us, with reason, in proportion just:
If go you will, guard well against their arts,
For these are very barbarous and robust."
Orlando answered, "This I'll see, be sure,
And walk the wild on foot to be secure."

XXX.

The Abbot signed the great cross on his front,
"Then go you with God's benison and mine."
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
As the Abbot had directed, kept the line
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;
Who, seeing him alone in this design,
Surveyed him fore and aft with eyes observant,
Then asked him, "If he wished to stay as servant?"

XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease.
But, said Orlando, "Saracen insane!

I come to kill you, if it shall so please
God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—
Vile dog! 'tis past his patience to sustain."
The Giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,
When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII.

And being returned to where Orlando stood,
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging
The cord, he hurled a stone with strength so rude,
As showed a sample of his skill in slinging;
It rolled on Count Orlando's helmet good
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing,
So that he swooned with pain as if he died,
But more than dead, he seemed so stupified.

XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,
Said, "I will go, and while he lies along,
Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?"
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,
Especially Orlando, such a knight,
As to desert would almost be a wrong.
While the giant goes to put off his defences,
Orlando has recalled his force and senses:

XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, "Giant, where dost go?
Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;
To the right about—without wings thou'rt too slow
To fly my vengeance—currish renegade!
Twas but by treachery thou laid'st me low."
The giant his astonishment betrayed,
And turned about, and stopped his journey on,
And then he stooped to pick up a great stone.

XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand;
To split the head in twain was what he schemed:

Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
And pagan Passamont died unredeemed;
Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he banned,
And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;[1]
But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,
Orlando thanked the Father and the Word,—

XXXVI.

Saying, "What grace to me thou'st this day given!
And I to thee, O Lord! am ever bound;
I know my life was saved by thee from Heaven,
Since by the Giant I was fairly downed.
All things by thee are measured just and even;
Our power without thine aid would nought be found:
I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
At least return once more to Carloman."

XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;
And Alabaster he found out below,
Doing the very best that in him lay
To root from out a bank a rock or two.
Orlando, when he reached him, loud 'gan say,
"How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw?"
When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII.

And hurled a fragment of a size so large,
That if it had in fact fulfilled its mission,
And Roland not availed him of his targe,
There would have been no need of a physician.[2]

1. ["Macon" is another form of "Mahomet." Compare—

"O Macon! break in twain the steelèd lance."

Fairfax's Tasso, *Gerusalemme Liberata*, book ix. stanza xxx. line 1.]

2. [Pulci seems to have been the originator of the humorous understatement. Compare—

"And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more."

Bret Harte's Poems, *The Society upon the Stanislaus*, line 26.]

Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
And in his bulky bosom made incision
With all his sword. The lout fell; but o'erthrown, he
However by no means forgot Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,
And stretched himself at ease in this abode,
And shut himself at night within his berth.
Orlando knocked, and knocked again, to goad
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,
The door to open, like a crazy thing,
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attacked him,
And Mahomet he called; but Mahomet
Is nothing worth, and, not an instant backed him;
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
At liberty from all the fears which racked him;
And to the gate he came with great regret—
"Who knocks here?" grumbling all the while, said he.
"That," said Orlando, "you will quickly see:

XLI.

"I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,—
Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;
For Providence divine, in you and others,
Condemns the evil done, my new acquaintance!
'Tis writ on high—your wrong must pay another's:
From Heaven itself is issued out this sentence.
Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
I left your Passamont and Alabaster."

XLII.

Morgante said, "Oh gentle Cavalier!
Now by thy God say me no villany;
The favour of your name I fain would hear,
And if a Christian, speak for courtesy."

Replied Orlando, "So much to your ear
I by my faith disclose contentedly;
Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
And, if you please, by you may be adored."

XLIII.

The Saracen rejoined in humble tone,
"I have had an extraordinary vision;
A savage serpent fell on me alone,
And Macon would not pity my condition;
Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
Upon the cross, preferred I my petition;
His timely succour set me safe and free,
And I a Christian am disposed to be."

XLIV.

Orlando answered, "Baron just and pious,
If this good wish your heart can really move
To the true God, who will not then deny us
Eternal honour, you will go above,
And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
And I will love you with a perfect love.
Your idols are vain liars, full of fraud:
The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV.

"The Lord descended to the virgin breast
Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,
Without whom neither sun nor star can shine,
Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
Your renegado god, and worship mine,
Baptize yourself with zeal, since you repent."
To which Morgante answered, "I'm content."

XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
And made much of his convert, as he cried,
"To the abbey I will gladly marshal you."
To whom Morgante, "Let us go," replied;

"I to the friars have for peace to sue."
Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,
Saying, "My brother, so devout and good,
Ask the Abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

XLVII.

"Since God has granted your illumination,
Accepting you in mercy for his own,
Humility should be your first oblation."
Morgante said, "For goodness' sake, make known,—
Since that your God is to be mine—your station,
And let your name in verity be shown;
Then will I everything at your command do."
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

XLVIII.

"Then," quoth the Giant, "blessed be Jesu
A thousand times with gratitude and praise!
Oft, perfect Baron! have I heard of you
Through all the different periods of my days:
And, as I said, to be your vassal too
I wish, for your great gallantry always."
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX.

And by the way about the giants dead
Orlando with Morgante reasoned: "Be,
For their decease, I pray you, comforted,
And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me;
A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred;
And our true Scripture soundeth openly,
Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,
Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

L.

"Because His love of justice unto all
Is such, He wills His judgment should devour
All who have sin, however great or small;
But good He well remembers to restore.

Nor without justice holy could we call
Him, whom I now require you to adore.
All men must make His will their wishes sway,
And quickly and spontaneously obey.

LI.

"And here our doctors are of one accord,
Coming on this point to the same conclusion,—
That in their thoughts, who praise in Heaven the Lord,
If Pity e'er was guilty of intrusion
For their unfortunate relations stored
In Hell below, and damned in great confusion,
Their happiness would be reduced to nought,—
And thus unjust the Almighty's self be thought.

LII.

"But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all
Which seems to Him, to them too must appear
Well done; nor could it otherwise befall;
He never can in any purpose err.
If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
They don't disturb themselves for him or her:
What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—
Such is the observance of the eternal choir."

LIII.

"A word unto the wise," Morgante said,
"Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
How much I grieve about my brethren dead;
And if the will of God seem good to me,
Just, as you tell me, 'tis in Heaven obeyed—
Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be!
I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,
And carry them unto the holy monks.

LIV.

"So that all persons may be sure and certain
That they are dead, and have no further fear
To wander solitary this desert in,
And that they may perceive my spirit clear

By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain
Of darkness, making His bright realm appear."
He cut his brethren's hands off at these words,
And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,
Where waited them the Abbot in great doubt.
The monks, who knew not yet the fact, ran thither
To their superior, all in breathless rout,
Saying with tremor, "Please to tell us whether
You wish to have this person in or out?"
The Abbot, looking through upon the Giant,
Too greatly feared, at first, to be compliant.

LVI.

Orlando seeing him thus agitated,
Said quickly, "Abbot, be thou of good cheer;
He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,
And hath renounced his Macon false;" which here
Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the Abbot God adored,
Saying, "Thou hast contented me, O Lord!"

LVII.

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his size;
And then he said, "O Giant celebrated!
Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
How you could tear and fling the trees you late did,
When I behold your form with my own eyes.
You now a true and perfect friend will show
Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII.

"And one of our apostles, Saul once named,
Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
Till, one day, by the Spirit being inflamed,
'Why dost thou persecute me thus?' said Christ;

And then from his offence he was reclaimed,
And went for ever after preaching Christ,
And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding
O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

LIX.

"So, my Morgante, you may do likewise:
He who repents—thus writes the Evangelist—
Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.
You may be sure, should each desire arise
With just zeal for the Lord, that you'll exist
Among the happy saints for evermore;
But you were lost and damned to Hell before!"

LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The Abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both strayed,
And sauntered here and there, where'er they chose,
The Abbot showed a chamber, where arrayed
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows;
And one of these Morgante for a whim
Girt on, though useless, he believed, to him.

LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
"Morgante, I could wish you in this case
To go for water." "You shall be obeyed
In all commands," was the reply, "straightways."
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink, below the mountain.

LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
Which suddenly along the forest spread;
Whereat from out his quiver he prepares
An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;

And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears
And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,
And to the fountain's brink precisely pours;
So that the Giant's joined by all the boars.

LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
And passed unto the other side quite through;
So that the boar, defunct, lay tripped up near.
Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
Against the Giant rushed in fierce career,
And reached the passage with so swift a foot,
Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
He gave him such a punch upon the head,[1]
As floored him so that he no more arose,
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

LXV.

The tub was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t'other, and he brushed apace
On to the abbey, though by no means near,
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,
Marvelled to see his strength so very great;
So did the Abbot, and set wide the gate.

1. "Gli dette in su la testa un gran punzone." It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master, Jackson, and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch. "*A punch on the head*," or "*a punch* in *the head*,"—"un punzone in su la testa,"—is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,[1]
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork;
All animals are glad at sight of food:
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

LXVII.

As though they wished to burst at once, they ate;
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
Perceiving that they all were picked too clean.
The Abbot, who to all did honour great,
A few days after this convivial scene,
Gave to Morgante a fine horse, well trained,
Which he long time had for himself maintained.

LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,
Thinking that he a back of iron had,
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.
Morgante said, "Get up, thou sulky cur!"
And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
And said, "I am as light as any feather,
And he has burst;—to this what say you, Count?"
Orlando answered, "Like a ship's mast rather

1. ["Half a dozen invectives against tyranny confiscate C^{d}. H^{d}. in a month; and eight and twenty cantos of quizzing Monks, Knights, and Church Government, are let loose for centuries."—Letter to Murray, May 8, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 21.]

You seem to me, and with the truck for front:
Let him go! Fortune wills that we together
Should march, but you on foot Morgante still."
To which the Giant answered, "So I will.

LXX.

"When there shall be occasion, you will see
How I approve my courage in the fight."
Orlando said, "I really think you'll be,
If it should prove God's will, a goodly knight;
Nor will you napping there discover me.
But never mind your horse, though out of sight
'Twere best to carry him into some wood,
If but the means or way I understood."

LXXI.

The Giant said, "Then carry him I will,
Since that to carry me he was so slack—
To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
But lend a hand to place him on my back."
Orlando answered, "If my counsel still
May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII.

"Take care he don't revenge himself, though dead,
As Nessus did of old beyond all cure.
I don't know if the fact you've heard or read;
But he will make you burst, you may be sure."
"But help him on my back," Morgante said,
"And you shall see what weight I can endure.
In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
With all the bells, I'd carry yonder belfry."

LXXIII.

The Abbot said, "The steeple may do well,
But for the bells, you've broken them, I wot."
Morgante answered, "Let them pay in Hell
The penalty who lie dead in yon grot;"

And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,
He said, "Now look if I the gout have got,
Orlando, in the legs,—or if I have force;"—
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this 'tis no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And fearing that he might be hurt or maimed,
Once more he bade him lay his burden by:
"Put down, nor bear him further the desert in."
Morgante said, "I'll carry him for certain."

LXXV.

He did; and stowed him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then returned with speed.
Orlando said, "Why longer do we stay?
Morgante, here is nought to do indeed."
The Abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said, with great respect, he had agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this decision
He wished to have his pardon and permission.

LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claimed:
He said, "I mean, and quickly, to retrieve
The lost days of time past, which may be blamed;
Some days ago I should have asked your leave,
Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
And know not how to show my sentiment,
So much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII.

"But in my heart I bear through every clime
The Abbot, abbey, and this solitude—
So much I love you in so short a time;
For me, from Heaven reward you with all good

The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!
Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood.
Meantime we stand expectant of your blessing,
And recommend us to your prayers with pressing."

LXXVIII.

Now when the Abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, "Cavalier," he said, "if I have less
Courteous and kind to your great worth appeared,
Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,
I know I have done too little in this case;
But blame our ignorance, and this poor place.

LXXIX.

"We can indeed but honour you with masses,
And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters,
Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
In verity much rather than the cloisters);
But such a love for you my heart embraces,
For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,
That wheresoe'er you go I too shall be,
And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX.

"This may involve a seeming contradiction;
But you I know are sage, and feel, and taste,
And understand my speech with full conviction.
For your just pious deeds may you be graced
With the Lord's great reward and benediction,
By whom you were directed to this waste:
To His high mercy is our freedom due,
For which we render thanks to Him and you.

LXXXI.

"You saved at once our life and soul: such fear
The Giants caused us, that the way was lost
By which we could pursue a fit career
In search of Jesus and the saintly Host;

And your departure breeds such sorrow here,
That comfortless we all are to our cost;
But months and years you would not stay in sloth,
Nor are you formed to wear our sober cloth,

LXXXII.

"But to bear arms, and wield the lance; indeed,
With these as much is done as with this cowl;
In proof of which the Scripture you may read,
This Giant up to Heaven may bear his soul
By your compassion: now in peace proceed.
Your state and name I seek not to unroll;
But, if I'm asked, this answer shall be given,
That here an angel was sent down from Heaven.

LXXXIII.

"If you want armour or aught else, go in,
Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,
And cover with it o'er this Giant's skin."
Orlando answered, "If there should lie loose
Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
Which might be turned to my companion's use,
The gift would be acceptable to me."
The Abbot said to him, "Come in and see."

LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall
Was covered with old armour like a crust,
The Abbot said to them, "I give you all."
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass,[1] was too small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.

1. [Byron could not make up his mind with regard to the translation of the Italian *sbergo*, which he had, correctly, rendered "cuirass." He was under the impression that the word "meant *helmet* also" (see his letters to Murray, March 1, 5, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 413-417). *Sbergo* or *usbergo*, as Moore points out (*Life*, p. 438, *note* 2), "is obviously the same as hauberk, habergeon, etc., all from the German *halsberg*, or covering for the neck." An old dictionary which Byron might have consulted, *Vocabolario Italiano-Latino*, Venice, 1794, gives

They wondered how it fitted him exactly,
Which ne'er had suited others so compactly.

LXXXV.

'Twas an immeasurable Giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occurred they drew him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said
In his own heart, "O God who in the sky
Know'st all things! how was Milo hither led?
Who caused the Giant in this place to die?"
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story:
From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

thorax, *lorica*, as the Latin equivalent of "Usbergo = armadura del busto, corazza." (See, too, for an authority quoted in the *Dizzionario Universale* (1797–1805) of Alberti di Villanuova, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 417, *note* 2.)]

[NOTE TO STANZA V. LINES 1, 2.—In an Edition of the *Morgante Maggiore* issued at Florence by G. Pulci, in 1900, line 2 of stanza v. runs thus—

"Com' egli ebbe un Ormanno e 'l suo Turpino."

The allusion to "Ormanno," who has been identified with a mythical chronicler, "Urmano from Paris" (see Rajna's *Ricerche sui Reali di Francia*, 1872, p. 51), and the appeal to the authority of Leonardo Aretino, must not be taken *au pied de la lettre*. At the same time, the opinion attributed to Leonardo is in accordance with contemporary sentiment and phraseology. Compare "Horum res gestas si quí auctores digni celebrassent, quam magnæ, quam admirabiles, quam veteribus illis similes viderentur."—B. Accolti Aretini (*ob.* 1466) *Dialogus de Præstantiâ Virorum sui Ævi*. P. Villani, *Liber de Florentiæ Famosis Civibus*, 1847, p. 112. From information kindly supplied by Professor V. Rossi, of the University of Pavia.]

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.

INTRODUCTION TO *FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.*

THE MS. of "a *literal* translation, word for word (versed like the original), of the episode of Francesca of Rimini" (Letter March 23, 1820, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 421), was sent to Murray from Ravenna, March 20, 1820 (*ibid.*, p. 419), a week after Byron had forwarded the MS. of the *Prophecy of Dante*. Presumably the translation had been made in the interval by way of illustrating and justifying the unfamiliar metre of the "Dante Imitation." In the letter which accompanied the translation he writes, "Enclosed you will find, *line for line*, in *third rhyme* (*terza rima*,) of which your British Blackguard reader as yet understands nothing, Fanny of Rimini. You know that she was born here, and married, and slain, from Cary, Boyd, and such people already. I have done it into *cramp* English, line for line, and rhyme for rhyme, to try the possibility. You had best append it to the poems already sent by last three posts."

In the matter of the "British Blackguard," that is, the general reader, Byron spoke by the card. Hayley's excellent translation of the three first cantos of the *Inferno* (*vide ante*, "Introduction to the *Prophecy of Dante*," p. 237), which must have been known to a previous generation, was forgotten, and with earlier experiments in *terza rima*, by Chaucer and the sixteenth and seventeenth century poets, neither Byron nor the British public had any familiar or definite acquaintance. But of late some interest had been awakened or revived in Dante and the *Divina Commedia*.

Cary's translation—begun in 1796, but not published as a whole till 1814—had met with a sudden and remarkable success. "The work, which had been published four years, but had remained in utter obscurity, was at once eagerly sought after. About a thousand copies of the first edition, that remained on hand, were immediately disposed of; in less than three months a new edition was called for." Moreover, the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews* were loud in its

praises (*Memoir of H. F. Cary*, 1847, ii. 28). Byron seems to have thought that a fragment of the *Inferno*, "versed like the original," would challenge comparison with Cary's rendering in blank verse, and would lend an additional interest to the "Pulci Translations, and the Dante Imitation." *Dîs aliter visum*, and Byron's translation of the episode of *Francesca of Rimini*, remained unpublished till it appeared in the pages of *The Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, 1830, ii. 309–311. (For separate translations of the episode, see *Stories of the Italian Poets*, by Leigh Hunt, 1846, i. 393–395, and for a rendering in blank verse by Lord [John] Russell, see *Literary Souvenir*, 1830, pp. 285–287.)

FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

DANTE, L'INFERNO.

CANTO QUINTO.

'Siede la terra dove nata fui
Sulla marina, dove il Po discende
Per aver pace co' seguaci sui.
Amor, che al cor gentil ratto s' apprende,
Prese costui della bella persona
Che mi fu tolta, e il modo ancor m' offende.

1. [Dante, in his *Inferno* (Canto V. lines 97–142), places Francesca and her lover Paolo among the lustful in the second circle of Hell. Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, married (circ. 1275) Gianciotto, second son of Malatesta da Verrucchio, Lord of Rimini. According to Boccaccio (*Il Comento sopra la Commedia*, 1863, i. 476, *sq.*), Gianciotto was "hideously deformed in countenance and figure," and determined to woo and marry Francesca by proxy. He accordingly "sent, as his representative, his younger brother Paolo, the handsomest and most accomplished man in all Italy. Francesca saw Paolo arrive, and imagined she beheld her future husband. That mistake was the commencement of her passion." A day came when the lovers were surprised together, and Gianciotto slew both his brother and his wife.]

2. ["On arrive à Ravenne en longeant une forêt de pins qui a sept lieues de long, et qui me semblait un immense bois funèbre servant d'avenue au sépulcre commun de ces deux grandes puissances. A peine y a-t-il place pour d'autres souvenirs à côté de leur mémoire. Cependant d'autres noms poétiques sont attachés à la Pineta de Ravenne. Naguère lord Byron y évoquait les fantastiques récits empruntés par Dryden à Boccace, et lui-même est maintenant une figure du passé, errante dans ce lieu mélancolique. Je songeais, en le traversant, que le chantre du désespoir avait chevauché sur cette plage lugubre, foulée avant lui par le pas grave et lent du poëte de *l'Enfer*. . . .

FRANCESCA OF RIMINI.[1]

FROM THE *INFERNO* OF DANTE.

CANTO THE FIFTH.

"The Land where I was born[2] sits by the Seas
Upon that shore to which the Po descends,
With all his followers, in search of peace.
Love, which the gentle heart soon apprehends,
Seized him for the fair person which was ta'en
From me,[3] and me even yet the mode offends.

"Il suffit de jeter les yeux sur une carte pour reconnaître l'exactitude topographique de cette dernière expression. En effet, dans toute la partie supérieure de son cours, le Po reçoit une foule d'affluents qui convergent vers son lit; ce sont le Tésin, l'Adda, l'Olio, le Mincio, la Trebbia, la Bormida, le Taro. . . ."—*La Grèce, Rome, et Dante* ("Voyage Dantesque"), par M. J. J. Ampère, 1850, pp. 311–313.]

3. [The meaning is that she was despoiled of her beauty by death, and that the manner of her death excites her indignation still.

"Among Lord Byron's unpublished letters we find the following varied readings of the translation from Dante:—

Seized him for the fair person, which in its
Bloom was ta'en from me, yet the mode offends.
or,
Seized him for the fair form, of which in its
Bloom I was reft, and yet the mode offends.

Love, which to none beloved to love remits,
Seized me { with mutual wish to please / with wish of pleasing him / with the desire to please } so strong,
That, as thou see'st, not yet that passion quits, etc.

You will find these readings vary from the MS. I sent you. They are

Amor, che a nullo amato amar perdona,
Mi prese del costui piacer sì forte,
Che, come vedi, ancor non mi abbandona.
Amor condusse noi ad una morte:
Caino attende chi vita ci spense.'
Queste parole da lor ci fur porte.
Da che io intesi quelle anime offense
Chinai 'l viso, e tanto il tenni basso,
Finchè il Poeta mi disse: 'Che pense?'
Quando risposi, cominciai: 'O lasso!
Quanti dolci pensier, quanto disio
Menò costoro al doloroso passo!'
Poi mi rivolsi a loro, e parla' io,
E cominciai: 'Francesca, i tuoi martiri
A lagrimar mi fanno tristo e pio.
Ma dimmi: al tempo de' dolci sospiri
A che e come concedette Amore,
Che conoscesti i dubbiosi desiri?'
Ed ella a me: 'Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria; e ciò sa il tuo dottore.
Ma se a conoscer la prima radice
Del nostro amor tu hai cotanto affetto
Farò come colui che piange e dice.

closer, but rougher: take which is liked best; or, if you like, print them as variations. They are all close to the text."—*Works of Lord Byron*, 1832, xii. 5, *note* 2.]

1. ["The man's desire is for the woman; but the woman's desire is rarely other than for the desire of the man."—S. T. Coleridge, *Table Talk*, July 23, 1827.]

2. [Caïna is the first belt of Cocytus, that is, circle ix. of the Inferno, in which fratricides and betrayers of their kindred are immersed up to the neck.]

3. [Virgil.]

4. [The sentiment is derived from Boethius: "*In omni adversitate fortunæ infelicissimum genus est infortunii, fuisse felicem.*"—*De Consolat. Philos. Lib. II. Prosa* 4. The earlier commentators (*e.g.* Venturi and Biagioli), relying on a passage in the *Convito* (ii. 16), assume that the "teacher" (line 27) is the author of the sentence, but later authorities point out that "mio dottore" can only apply to Virgil (v. 70), who then and there in the world of shades was suffering the bitter experience of having "known better days." Compare—

"For of fortunes sharp adversitee
The worst kinde of infortune is this,

Love, who to none beloved to love again
Remits, seized me with wish to please, so strong,[1]
That, as thou see'st, yet, yet it doth remain.
Love to one death conducted us along,
But Caina[2] waits for him our life who ended:"
These were the accents uttered by her tongue.—
Since I first listened to these Souls offended,
I bowed my visage, and so kept it till—
'What think'st thou?' said the bard;[3] when I unbended,
And recommenced: 'Alas! unto such ill
How many sweet thoughts, what strong ecstacies,
Led these their evil fortune to fulfill!'
And then I turned unto their side my eyes,
And said, 'Francesca, thy sad destinies
Have made me sorrow till the tears arise.
But tell me, in the Season of sweet sighs,
By what and how thy Love to Passion rose,
So as his dim desires to recognize?'
Then she to me: 'The greatest of all woes
Is to remind us of our happy days[i. 4]
In misery, and that thy teacher knows.
But if to learn our Passion's first root preys
Upon thy spirit with such Sympathy,
I will do even as he who weeps and says.[ii. 5]

i. *Is to recall to mind our happy days.*
In misery, and this thy teacher knows.—[*MS.*]
ii. *I will relate as he who weeps and says.*—[*MS.*]
(The sense is, *I will do even as one who relates while weeping.*

A man to have ben in prosperitee,
And it remembren whan it passéd is."
Troilus and Criseyde, Bk. III. stanza ccxxxiii. lines 1–4.

"E perché rimembrare il ben perduto
Fa più meschino lo stato presente."
Fortiguerra's *Ricciardetto*, Canto XI. stanza lxxxiii.

Compare, too—
"A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things."
Tennyson's *Locksley Hall.*]

5. [Byron affixed the following note to line 126 of the Italian: "In some of the editions it is 'dirò,' in others 'faro;'—an essential difference between 'saying' and 'doing' which I know not how to decide—Ask Foscolo—the damned editions drive me mad." In *La Divina Commedia*, Firenze, 1892, and the *Opere de Dante*, Oxford, 1897, the reading is *faro.*]

Noi leggevamo un giorno per diletto
Di Lancelotto, come Amor lo strinse:
Soli eravamo, e senza alcun sospetto.
Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse
Quella lettura, e scolorocci il viso:
Ma solo un punto fu quel che ci vinse.
Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
Esser baciato da cotanto amante,
Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,
La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante: 40
Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse—
Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante
Mentre che l' uno spirto questo disse,
L' altro piangeva sì che di pietade
Io venni meno così com' io morisse;
E caddi, come corpo morto cade.

1. ["A Gallehault was the book and he who wrote it" (A. J. Butler). "Writer and book were Gallehault to our will" (E. J. Plumptre). The book which the lovers were reading is entitled *L'Illustre et Famosa Historia di Lancilotto del Lago.* The "one point" of the original runs thus: "Et la reina . . . lo piglia per il mento, et lo bacia davanti a Gallehault, assai lungamente."—Venice, 1558, *Lib. Prim.* cap. lxvi. vol. i. p. 229. The Gallehault of the *Lancilotto*, the shameless "purveyor," must not be confounded with the stainless Galahad of the *Morte d'Arthur.*]

2. [Dante was in his twentieth, or twenty-first year when the tragedy of Francesca and Paolo was enacted, not at Rimini, but at Pesaro. Some acquaintance he may have had with her, through his friend Guido (not her father, but probably her nephew), enough to account for the peculiar emotion caused by her sanguinary doom.]

3. Alternative Versions transcribed by Mrs. Shelley.

March 20, 1820.

line 4: Love, which too soon the soft heart apprehends,
Seized him for the fair form, the which was there
Torn from me, and even yet the mode offends.

line 8: Remits, seized him for me with joy so strong—

line 12: These were the words then uttered—
Since I had first perceived these souls offended,
I bowed my visage and so kept it till—
"What think'st thou?" said the bard, whom I (*sic*)
And then commenced—"Alas unto such ill—

line 18: Led these?" and then I turned me to them still
And spoke, "Francesca, thy sad destinies
Have made me sad and tender even to tears,
But tell me, in the season of sweet sighs,

We read one day for pastime, seated nigh,
Of Lancilot, how Love enchained him too.
We were alone, quite unsuspiciously.
But oft our eyes met, and our Cheeks in hue
All o'er discoloured by that reading were;
But one point only wholly us o'erthrew;[i.]
When we read the long-sighed-for smile of her,[ii.]
To be thus kissed by such devoted lover,[iii.]
He, who from me can be divided ne'er,
Kissed my mouth, trembling in the act all over:
Accurséd was the book and he who wrote![1]
That day no further leaf we did uncover.'
While thus one Spirit told us of their lot,
The other wept, so that with Pity's thralls
I swooned, as if by Death I had been smote,[2]
And fell down even as a dead body falls." [3]

March 20, 1820.

i. —— *wholly overthrew.*—[*MS.*]
ii. *When we read the desired-for smile of her.*—[*MS. Alternative reading.*]
iii. —— *by such a fervent lover.*—[*MS.*]

By what and how Love overcame your fears,
So ye might recognize his dim desires?"
Then she to me, "No greater grief appears
Than, when the time of happiness expires,
To recollect, and this your teacher knows,
But if to find the first root of our——
Thou seek'st with such a sympathy in woes,
I will do even as he who weeps and speaks.
We read one day for pleasure, sitting close,
Of Launcelot, where forth his passion breaks.
We were alone and we suspected nought,
But oft our eyes exchanged, and changed our cheeks.
When we read the desiring smile of her
Who to be kissed by such true lover sought,
He who from me can be divided ne'er
All tremulously kissed my trembling mouth.
Accursed the book and he who wrote it were—
That day no further did we read in sooth."
While the one spirit in this manner spoke
The other wept, so that, for very ruth,
I felt as if my trembling heart had broke,
To see the misery which both enthralls:
So that I swooned as dying with the stroke,—
And fell down even as a dead body falls.

Another version of the same.

line 21: Have made me sad even until the tears arise—

line 27: In wretchedness, and that your teacher knows.

line 31: We read one day for pleasure—
Of Launcelot, how passion shook his frame.
We were alone all unsuspiciously.
But oft our eyes met and our cheeks the same,
Pale and discoloured by that reading were;
But one part only wholly overcame;
When we read the desiring smile of her
Who sought the kiss of such devoted lover;
He who from me can be divided ne'er
Kissed my mouth, trembling to that kiss all over!
Accurséd was that book and he who wrote—
That day we did no further page uncover."
While thus—etc.

line 45: I swooned to death with sympathetic thought—

[Another version.]

line 33: We were alone, and we suspected nought.
But oft our meeting eyes made pale our cheeks,
Urged by that reading for our ruin wrought;
But one point only wholly overcame:
When we read the desiring smile which sought
By such true lover to be kissed—the same
Who from my side can be divided ne'er
Kissed my mouth, trembling o'er all his frame!
Accurst the book, etc., etc.

[Another version.]

line 33: We were alone and—etc.
But one point only 'twas our ruin wrought.
When we read the desiring smile of her
Who to be kissed of such true lover sought;
He who for me, etc., etc.

MARINO FALIERO,

DOGE OF VENICE;

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY,
IN FIVE ACTS.

"*Dux* inquieti turbidus Adriæ."
Horace, [*Od.* III. c. iii. line 5].

[*Marino Faliero* was produced for the first time at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, April 25, 1821. Mr. Cooper played "The Doge;" Mrs. W. West, "Angiolina, wife of the Doge." The piece was repeated on April 30, May 1, 2, 3, 4, and 14, 1821.

A revival was attempted at Drury Lane, May 20, 21, 1842, when Macready appeared as "The Doge," and Helen Faucit as "Angiolina" (see *Life* and *Remains* of E. L. Blanchard, 1891, i. 346–348).

An adaptation of Byron's play, by W. Bayle Bernard, was produced at Drury Lane, November 2, 1867. It was played till December 17, 1867. Phelps took the part of "The Doge," and Mrs. Hermann of "Angiolina." In Germany an adaptation by Arthur Fitger was performed nineteen times by the "Meiningers," circ. 1887 (see *Englische Studien*, 1899, xxvii. 146).]

INTRODUCTION TO *MARINO FALIERO.*

BYRON had no sooner finished the first draft of *Manfred* than he began (February 25, 1817) to lay the foundation of another tragedy. Venice was new to him, and, on visiting the Doge's Palace, the veiled space intended for the portrait of Marin Falier, and the "Giants' Staircase," where, as he believed, "he was once crowned and afterwards decapitated," had laid hold of his imagination, while the legend of the *Congiura*, "an old man jealous and conspiring against the state of which he was . . . Chief," promised a subject which the "devil himself" might have dramatized *con amore*.

But other interests and ideas claimed his attention, and for more than three years the project slept. At length he slips into the postscript of a letter to Murray, dated, "Ravenna, April 9, 1820" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 7), an intimation that he had begun "a tragedy on the subject of Marino Faliero, the Doge of Venice." The "Imitation of Dante, the Translation of Pulci, the Danticles," etc., were worked off, and, in prospecting for a new vein, a fresh lode of literary ore, he passed, by a natural transition, from Italian literature to Italian history, from the romantic and humorous *epopee* of Pulci and Berni, to the pseudo-classic drama of Alfieri and Monti.

Jealousy, as "Monk" Lewis had advised him (August, 1817), was an "exhausted passion" in the drama, and to lay the scene in Venice was to provoke comparison with Shakespeare and Otway; but the man himself, the fiery Doge, passionate but not jealous, a noble turned democrat *pro hac vice*, an old man "greatly" finding "quarrel in a straw," afforded a theme historically time-honoured, and yet unappropriated by tragic art.

There was, too, a living interest in the story. For history was repeating itself, and "politics were savage and uncertain." "Mischief was afoot," and the tradition of a conspiracy which failed might find an historic parallel in

a conspiracy which would succeed. There was "THAT brewing in Italy" which might, perhaps, inspire "a people to redress itself," "and with a cry of, 'Up with the Republic!' 'Down with the Nobility!' send the Barbarians of all nations back to their own dens!" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 10, 12, 19.)

In taking the field as a dramatist, Byron sought to win distinction for himself—in the first place by historical accuracy, and, secondly, by artistic regularity—by a stricter attention to the dramatic "unities." "History is closely followed," he tells Murray, in a letter dated July 17, 1820; and, again, in the Preface (*vide post*, pp. 332–337), which is an expansion of the letter, he gives a list of the authorities which he had consulted, and claims to have "transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration." More than once in his letters to Murray he reverts to this profession of accuracy, and encloses some additional note, in which he points out and rectifies an occasional deviation from the historical record. In this respect, at any rate, he could contend on more than equal terms "with established writers," that is, with Shakespeare and Otway, and could present to his countrymen an exacter and, so, more lifelike picture of the Venetian Republic. It is plain, too, that he was bitten with the love of study for its own sake, with a premature passion for erudition, and that he sought and found relief from physical and intellectual excitement in the intricacies of research. If his history is at fault, it was not from any lack of diligence on his part, but because the materials at his disposal or within his cognizance were inaccurate and misleading. He makes no mention of the huge collection of Venetian archives which had recently been deposited in the Convent of the Frari, or of Doria's transcript of Sanudo's Diaries, bequeathed in 1816 to the Library of St. Mark; but he quotes as his authorities the *Vitæ Ducum Venetorum*, of Marin Sanudo (1466–1535), the *Storia, etc.*, of Andrea Navagero (1483–1529), and the *Principj di Storia, etc.*, of Vettor Sandi, which belongs to the latter half of the eighteenth century. Byron's chroniclers were ancient, but not ancient enough; and, though they "handed down the story" (see Medwin, *Conversations*, p. 173), they depart in numerous particulars from the facts recorded in contemporary documents. Unquestionably the legend, as it appears in Sanudo's perplexing and uncritical narrative (see, for the translation of an original version of the Italian, *Appendix*, pp. 462–467), is more dramatic than the "low beginnings" of the myth, which may be traced to the annalists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; but, like other legends, it is insusceptible of proof. Byron's Doge is almost, if not quite, as

unhistorical as his Bonivard or his Mazeppa. (See *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1893, vol. v. pt. i. pp. 95–197; 1897, vol. xiii. pt. i. pp. 5–107; pt. ii. pp. 277–374; *Les Archives de Venise*, par Armand Baschet, 1870; *Storia della Repubblica di Venizia*, Giuseppe Cappelletti, 1849, iv. pp. 262–317.)

At the close of the Preface, by way of an afterthought, Byron announces his determination to escape "the reproach of the English theatrical compositions" "by preserving a nearer approach to unity," by substituting the regularity of French and Italian models for the barbarities of the Elizabethan dramatists and their successors. Goethe (*Conversations*, 1874, p. 114) is said to have "laughed to think that Byron, who, in practical life, could never adapt himself, and never even asked about a law, finally subjected himself to the stupidest of laws—that of the *three unities*." It was, perhaps, in part with this object in view, to make his readers smile, to provoke their astonishment, that he affected a severity foreign to his genius and at variance with his record. It was an agreeable thought that he could so easily pass from one extreme to another, from *Manfred* to *Marino Faliero*, and, at the same time, indulge "in a little sally of gratuitous sauciness" (*Quarterly Review*, July, 1822, vol. xxvii. p. 480) at the expense of his own countrymen. But there were other influences at work. He had been powerfully impressed by the energy and directness of Alfieri's work, and he was eager to emulate the gravity and simplicity, if not the terseness and conciseness, of his style and language. The drama was a new world to conquer, and so far as "his own literature" was concerned it appeared that success might be attainable by "a severer approach to the rules" (Letter to Murray, February 16, 1821)—that by taking Alfieri as his model he might step into the first rank of English dramatists.

Goethe thought that Byron failed "to understand the purpose" of the "three unities," that he regarded the law as an end in itself, and did not perceive that if a play was "comprehensible" the unities might be neglected and disregarded. It is possible that his "blind obedience to the law" may have been dictated by the fervour of a convert; but it is equally possible that he looked beyond the law or its fulfilment to an ulterior object, the discomfiture of the romantic school, with its contempt for regularity, its passionate appeal from art to nature. If he was minded to raise a "Grecian temple of the purest architecture" (*Letters*, 1901, v. Appendix III. p. 559), it was not without some thought and hope of shaming, by force of contrast, the "mosque," the "grotesque edifice" of barbarian contemporaries and rivals. Byron was

"ever a fighter," and his claim to regularity, to a closer preservation of the "unities," was of the nature of a challenge.

Marino Faliero was dedicated to "Baron Goethe," but the letter which should have contained the dedication was delayed in transit. Goethe never saw the dedication till it was placed in his hands by John Murray the Third, in 1831, but he read the play, and after Byron's death bore testimony to its peculiar characteristics and essential worth. "Lord Byron, notwithstanding his predominant personality, has sometimes had the power of renouncing himself altogether, as may be seen in some of his dramatic pieces, particularly in his *Marino Faliero*. In this piece one quite forgets that Lord Byron, or even an Englishman, wrote it. We live entirely in Venice, and entirely in the time in which the action takes place. The personages speak quite from themselves and their own condition, without having any of the subjective feelings, thoughts, and opinions of the poet" (*Conversations*, 1874, p. 453).

Byron spent three months over the composition of *Marino Faliero*. The tragedy was completed July 17 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 52), and the copying (*vide post*, p. 461, *note* 2) a month later (August 16, 17, 1820). The final draft of "all the acts corrected" was despatched to England some days before October 6, 1820.

Early in January, 1821 (see Letters to Murray, January 11, 20, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 221–228), an announcement reached Byron that his play was to be brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, by Elliston. Against this he protested by every means in his power, and finally, on Wednesday, April 25, four days after the publication of the first edition (April 21, 1821), an injunction was obtained from Lord Chancellor Eldon, prohibiting a performance announced for that evening. Elliston pursued the Chancellor to the steps of his own house, and at the last moment persuaded him to allow the play to be acted on that night only. Legal proceeedings were taken, but, in the end, the injunction was withdrawn, with the consent of Byron's solicitors, and the play was represented again on April 30, and on five nights in the following May. As Byron had foreseen, *Marino Faliero* was coldly received by the playgoing public, and proved a loss to the "speculating buffoons," who had not realized that it was "unfit for their Fair or their booth" (Letter to Murray, January 20, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 228, and p. 226, *note* 2. See, too, *Memoirs of Robert W. Elliston*, 1845, pp. 268–271).

Byron was the first to perceive that the story of Marino Faliero was a drama "ready to hand;" but he has had many followers, if not imitators or rivals.

"*Marino Faliero*, tragédie en cinq actes," by Casimir Jean François Delavigne, was played for the first time at the Theatre of Porte Saint Martin, May 31, 1829.

In Germany tragedies based on the same theme have been published by Otto Ludwig, Leipzig, 1874; Martin Grief, Vienna, 1879; Murad Effendi (Franz von Werner), 1881, and others (*Englische Studien*, vol. xxvii. pp. 146, 147).

Marino Faliero, a Tragedy, by A. C. Swinburne, was published in 1885.

Marino Faliero was reviewed by Jeffrey, in the *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1821, vol. 35, pp. 271–285; by Heber, in the *Quarterly Review*, July, 1822, vol. xxvii. pp. 476–492; and by John Wilson, in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, April, 1821, vol. 9, pp. 93–103. For other notices, *vide ante* ("Introduction to *The Prophecy of Dante*"), p. 240.

PREFACE.

THE conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the "Lives of the Doges," by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is perhaps more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander-in-chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara,[1] where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check; an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Alesia,[2] and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo

1. [Marin Faliero was not in command of the land forces at the siege of Zara in 1346. According to contemporary documents, he held a naval command under Civran, who was in charge of the fleet. Byron was misled by an error in Morelli's Italian version of the *Chronica iadratina seu historia obsidionis Jaderæ*, p. xi. (See *Marino faliero avanti il Dogado*, by Vittorio Lazzarino, published in *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1893, vol. v. pt. i. p. 132, *note* 4.)]

2. [For the siege of Alesia (Alise in Côte d'Or), which resulted in the defeat of the Gauls and the surrender of Vercingetorix, see *De Bello Gallico*, vii. 68–90. Belgrade fell to Prince Eugene, August 18, 1717.]

d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome,—at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprised of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host.[1] For this, honest Sanuto "saddles him with a judgment," as Thwackum did Square;[2] but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the Senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of count, by Lorenzo, Count-bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are Sanuto, Vettor Sandi,[3] Andrea Navagero,[4] and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abate Morelli, in his *Monumenti Veneziani di varia Letteratura*, printed in 1796,[5] all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Darù, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the

1. [If this event ever took place, it must have been in 1346, when the future Doge was between sixty and seventy years of age. The story appears for the first time in the chronicle of Bartolomeo Zuccato, notajo e cancelliere of the Comune di Treviso, which belongs to the first half of the sixteenth century. The Venetian chroniclers who were Faliero's contemporaries, and Anonimo Torriano, a Trevisan, who wrote before Zuccato, are silent. See *Marino Faliero, La Congiura*, by Vittorio Lazzarino.—*Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1897, vol. xiii. pt. i. p. 29.]

2. ["Square talked in a very different strain. . . . In pronouncing these [sentences from the *Tusculan Questions*, *etc.*] he was one day so eager that he unfortunately bit his tongue . . . this accident gave Thwackum, who was present, and who held all such doctrines to be heathenish and atheistical, an opportunity to clap a judgment on his back."—*The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, Bk. V. chap. ii. 1768, i. 234. See, too, Letter to Murray, November 23, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 142; *Life*, p. 570.]

3. [*Principj di storia civile della Repubblica di Venezia.* Scritti da Vettor Sandi, 1755, Part II. tom. i. pp. 127, 128.]

4. [*Storia della Republica Veneziana.* Scritta da Andrea Navagiero, *apud* Muratori, *Italic. Rerum, Scriptores*, 1733, xxiii. p. 924, *sq.*]

5. [*Istoria dell' assedio e della Ricupera di Zara, Fatta da' Veneziani nell' anno* 1346. Scritta da auctore contemporaneo, pp. i.–xxxviii.]

ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy;* but I find this nowhere asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says that "Altri scrissero che . . . . . dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza," etc., etc.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto, or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that "per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe independente." The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their "tre Capi."[1] The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the "Dogaressa"[2] herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion) that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr. Moore in his View of Italy.[3] His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an

1. [Michele Steno was not, as Sanudo and others state, one of the Capi of the Quarantia in 1355, but twenty years later, in 1375. When Faliero was elected to the Dogeship, Steno was a youth of twenty, and a man under thirty years of age was not eligible for the Quarantia.—*La Congiura, etc.*, p. 64.]

2. [History does not bear out the tradition of her youth. Aluica Gradenigo was born in the first decade of the fourteenth century, and became Dogaressa when she was more than forty-five years of age.—*La Congiura*, p. 69.]

3. [See *A View of the Society and Manners in Italy*, by John Moore, M.D., 1781, i. 144–152. The "stale jest" is thus worded: "This lady imagined she had been affronted by a young Venetian nobleman at a public ball, and she complained bitterly . . . to her husband. The old Doge, who had all the desire imaginable to please his wife, determined, in this matter, at least, to give her ample satisfaction."]

effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of Zeluco could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs. Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht—that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars, because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a window, and wished to give him another occupation—that Helen lost Troy—that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome—and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain—that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome—that a single verse of Frederick II.[1] of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach—that the elopement of Dearbhorgil[2] with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons —and, not to multiply instances of the *teterrima causa*, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance—and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America destroyed both King and Commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection it is indeed extraordinary in Dr. Moore to seem surprised that a man used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it—

> "The young man's wrath is like [light] straw on fire,
> *But like red hot steel is the old man's ire.*"
> [Davie Gellatley's song in *Waverley*, chap. xiv.]

1. [For Frederick's verse, "Evitez de Bernis la stérile abondance," see *La Bibliographie Universelle*, art. "Bernis;" and for his jest, "Je ne la connais pas," see *History of Frederick the Great*, by Thomas Carlyle, 1898, vi. 14.]

2. [For the story of the abduction of Dervorgilla, wife of Tiernan O'Ruarc, by Dermot Mac-Murchad, King of Leinster, in 1153, see Moore's *History of Ireland*, 1837, ii. 200.]

"Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical:—"Tale fù il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascità, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragj per collocarlo alla testa della repubblica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamente la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che bastò a corrompere le antiche sue qualità, e a condurlo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*" [1]

Where did Dr. Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind: it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians, who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification, at any distance of time, for calumniating an historical character: surely truth belongs to the dead, and to the unfortunate: and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the

1. [*Istoria della Repubblica di Venezia*, del Sig. Abate Laugier, Tradotta del Francese. Venice, 1778, iv. 30.]

place of Marino Faliero amongst the Doges, and the Giants' Staircase,[1] where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination; as did his fiery character and strange story. I went, in 1819, in search of his tomb more than once to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and, as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and, conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall with an illegible inscription.[2] He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue[3] of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino; Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara, in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least

1. [The marble staircase on which Faliero took the ducal oath, and on which he was afterwards beheaded, led into the courtyard of the palace. It was erected by a decree of the Senate in 1340, and was pulled down to make room for Rizzo's façade, which was erected in 1484. The "Scala dei Giganti" (built by Antonio Rizzo, circ. 1483) does not occupy the site of the older staircase.]

2. [On the north side of the Campo, in front of the Church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo (better known as San Zanipolo), stands the Scuola di San Marco. Attached to the lower hall of the Scuola is the Chapel of Santa Maria della Pace, in which the sarcophagus containing the bones of Marino Faliero was discovered in 1815.]

3. [In the Campo in front of the church is the equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni, designed by Andrea Veroccio, and cast in 1496 by Alessandro Leopardi.—*Handbook: Northern Italy*, p. 374.]

transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work; and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But, perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis [1] on that point, in talking with him of my intention at Venice in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakespeare, and an exhausted subject:—stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond [2] gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time.[i] And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling [ii] putting himself at the mercies of an audience. The sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of

i. *It is like being at the whole process of a woman's toilet—it disenchants.* —[*MS. M.*]

ii. *Any man of common independence.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [See *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 317, *note* 1.]
2. [See *Letters*, 1898, ii. 79, *note* 3.]

the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will.[1] But I wish that others would, for surely there is dramatic power somewhere, where

1. While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get *De Montford* revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's *Ivan*, which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr. Coleridge to write us a tragedy.* Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the *School for Scandal* is the play which has brought the *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's *Bertram* I am not aware;† so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers; if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the *Parisian Gazette* of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me, then, deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *Gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill‡ I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw anything at all resembling them, even in *person;* for this reason, we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace, not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all, *not* SUPER-natural parts, he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose,

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* [See letter to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, March 31, 1815, *Letters*, 1899, iii. 190; letter to Moore, October 28, 1815, and *note* 1 (with quotation from unpublished letter of Coleridge), and passages from Byron's *Detached Thoughts* (1821) . . . *ibid.*, pp. 230, 233–238.]

† [Maturin's *Bertram* was played for the first time at Drury Lane, May 9, 1816. (See *Detached Thoughts* (1821), *Letters*, 1899, iii. 233, and letter to Murray, October 12, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 171.)]

‡ [Elizabeth O'Neill (1791–1872), afterwards Lady Becher, made her *début* in 1814, and retired from the stage in 1819. Sarah Siddons (1755–1831) made her final appearance on the stage June 9, 1818, and her brother John Philip Kemble (1757–1823) appeared for the last time in *Coriolanus*, June 23, 1817. Of the other actors mentioned in this note, George Frederick Cooke (1756–1812) had long been dead; Edmund Kean (1787–1833) had just returned from a successful tour in the United States; and Robert William Elliston (1774–1831) (*vide ante*, p. 328) had, not long before (1819), become lessee of Drury Lane Theatre.]

Joanna Baillie, and Milman, and John Wilson exist. The *City of the Plague* [1816] and the *Fall of Jerusalem* [1820] are full of the best "*matériel*" for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of *Ethwald* [1802] and *De Montfort* [1798]. It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters, and of the *Castle of Otranto* [1765], he is the "Ultimus Romanorum," the author of the *Mysterious Mother* [1768], a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.[1]

"that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch." *

1. [This appreciation of the *Mysterious Mother*, which he seems to have read in Lord Dover's preface to Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann, provoked Coleridge to an angry remonstrance. "I venture to remark, first, that I do not believe that Lord Byron spoke sincerely; for I suspect that he made a tacit exception of himself at least. . . . Thirdly, that the *Mysterious Mother* is the most disgusting, vile, detestable composition that ever came from the hand of man. No one with a spark of true manliness, of which Horace Walpole had none, could have written it."—*Table Talk*, March 20, 1834. Croker took a very different view, and maintained "that the good old English blank verse, the force of character expressed in the wretched mother . . . argue a strength of conception, and vigour of expression capable of great things," etc. Over and above the reasonable hope and expectation that this provocative eulogy of Walpole's play would annoy the "Cockneys" and the "Lakers," Byron was no doubt influenced in its favour by the audacity of the plot, which not only put *septentrional* prejudices at defiance, but was an instance in point that love ought not "to make a tragic subject unless it is love furious, criminal, and hopeless" (Letter to Murray, January 4, 1821). He would, too, be deeply and genuinely moved by such verse as this—

> "Consult a holy man! inquire of him!
> —Good father, wherefore? what should I inquire?
> Must I be taught of him that guilt is woe?
> That innocence alone is happiness—

* ["Le comte de Montross, Écossais et chef de la maison de Graham, le seul homme du monde qui m'ait jamais rappelé l'idée de certains héros que l'on ne voit plus que dans les vies de Plutarque, avait soutenu le parti du roi d'Angleterre dans son pays, avec une grandeur d'âme qui rien avait point de pareille en ce siècle.'—*Mémoires du Cardinal de Retz*, 1820, ii. 88.]

In speaking of the drama of *Marino Faliero*, I forgot to mention that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it; whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the Duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the Appendix.[1]

> That martyrdom itself shall leave the villain
> The villain that it found him? Must I learn
> That minutes stamped with crime are past recall?
> That joys are momentary; and remorse
> Eternal? . . .
> Nor could one risen from the dead proclaim
> This truth in deeper sounds to my conviction;
> We want no preacher to distinguish vice
> From virtue. At our birth the God revealed
> All conscience needs to know. No codicil
> To duty's rubric here and there was placed
> In some Saint's casual custody."
>
> Act i. sc. 3, *s.f. Works of the Earl of Orford*, 1798, i. 55.]

1. [Byron received a copy of Goethe's review of *Manfred*, which appeared in *Kunst und Alterthum* (ii. 2. 191) in May, 1820. In a letter to Murray, dated October 17, 1820 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 100), he enclosed a letter to Goethe, headed "For *Marino Faliero*. Dedication to Baron Goethe, etc., etc., etc." It is possible that Murray did not take the "Dedication" seriously, but regarded it as a *jeu d'esprit*, designed for the amusement of himself and his "synod." At any rate, the "Dedication" did not reach Goethe's hand till 1831, when it was presented to him at Weimar by John Murray the Third. "It is written," says Moore, who printed a mutilated version in his *Letters and Journals, etc.*, 1830, ii. 356–358, "in the poet's most whimsical and mocking mood; and the unmeasured severity poured out in it upon the two favourite objects of his wrath and ridicule, compels me to deprive the reader of its most amusing passages." The present text, which follows the MS., is reprinted from *Letters*, 1901, v. 100–104—

> "Dedication to Baron Goethe, etc., etc., etc.
>
> "SIR,—In the Appendix to an English work lately translated into German and published at Leipsic, a judgment of yours upon English

poetry is quoted as follows: 'That in English poetry, great genius, universal power, a feeling of profundity, with sufficient tenderness and force, are to be found; but that *altogether these do not constitute poets*,' etc., etc.

"I regret to see a great man falling into a great mistake. This opinion of yours only proves that the '*Dictionary of Ten Thousand living English Authors*' * has not been translated into German. You will have read, in your friend Schlegel's version, the dialogue in *Macbeth*—

"'There are *ten thousand!*
Macbeth. *Geese*, villain?
Answer. *Authors*, sir.' †

Now, of these 'ten thousand authors,' there are actually nineteen hundred and eighty-seven poets, all alive at this moment, whatever their works may be, as their booksellers well know: and amongst these there are several who possess a far greater reputation than mine, though considerably less than yours. It is owing to this neglect on the part of your German translators that you are not aware of the works of William Wordsworth, who has a baronet in London ‡ who draws him frontispieces and leads him about to dinners and to the play; and a Lord in the country, § who gave him a place in the Excise—and a cover at his table. You do not know perhaps that this Gentleman is the greatest of all poets past—present and to come—besides which he has written an '*Opus Magnum*' in prose—during the late election for Westmoreland. ‖ His principal publication is entitled '*Peter Bell*' which he had withheld from the public for '*one and twenty years*'—to the irreparable loss of all those who died in the interim, and will have no opportunity of reading it before the resurrection. There is also another named Southey, who is more than a poet, being actually poet Laureate,—a post which corresponds with what we call in Italy *Poeta Cesareo*, and which you call in German—I know not what; but as you have a '*Caesar*'—probably you have a name for it. In England there is no *Caesar*—only the Poet.

"I mention these poets by way of sample to enlighten you. They form but two bricks of our Babel, (WINDSOR bricks, by the way) but may serve for a specimen of the building.

"It is, moreover, asserted that 'the predominant character of the whole body of the present English poetry is a *disgust* and *contempt* for life.' But I rather suspect that by one single work of *prose, you* yourself have excited a greater contempt for life than all the English volumes of poesy that ever were written. Madame de Stäel says, that 'Werther has occasioned more suicides than the most beautiful woman;'

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* [*A Biographical Dictionary of Living Authors of Great Britain and Ireland, etc.*, London, 1816, 8vo.]

† ["*Macbeth.* Where got'st thou that goose look?
Servant. There is ten thousand—
Macbeth. Geese, villain?
Servant. Soldiers, sir."
Macbeth, act v. sc. 3, lines 12, 13.]

‡ [Sir George Beaumont. See Professor W. Knight, *Life of Wordsworth*, ii. (*Works*, vol. x.) 56.]

§ [Lord Lonsdale (*ibid.*, p. 209).]

‖ [*Two Addresses to the Freeholders of Westmoreland*, 1818.]

and I really believe that he has put more individuals out of this world than Napoleon himself,—except in the way of his profession. Perhaps, Illustrious Sir, the acrimonious judgment passed by a celebrated northern journal * upon you in particular, and the Germans in general, has rather indisposed you towards English poetry as well as criticism. But you must not regard our critics, who are at bottom good-natured fellows, considering their two professions,—taking up the law in court, and laying it down out of it. No one can more lament their hasty and unfair judgment, in your particular, than I do; and I so expressed myself to your friend Schlegel, in 1816, at Coppet.

"In behalf of my 'ten thousand' living brethren, and of myself, I have thus far taken notice of an opinion expressed with regard to 'English poetry' in general, and which merited notice, because it was YOURS.

"My principal object in addressing you was to testify my sincere respect and admiration of a man, who, for half a century, has led the literature of a great nation, and will go down to posterity as the first literary Character of his Age.

"You have been fortunate, Sir, not only in the writings which have illustrated your name, but in the name itself, as being sufficiently musical for the articulation of posterity. In this you have the advantage of some of your countrymen, whose names would perhaps be immortal also—if anybody could pronounce them.

"It may, perhaps, be supposed, by this apparent tone of levity, that I am wanting in intentional respect towards you; but this will be a mistake: I am always flippant in prose. Considering you, as I really and warmly do, in common with all your own, and with most other nations, to be by far the first literary Character which has existed in Europe since the death of Voltaire, I felt, and feel, desirous to inscribe to you the following work,—*not* as being either a tragedy or a *poem*, (for I cannot pronounce upon its pretensions to be either one or the other, or both, or neither,) but as a mark of esteem and admiration from a foreigner to the man who has been hailed in Germany 'THE GREAT GOETHE.'

"I have the honour to be,
"With the truest respect,
"Your most obedient and
"Very humble servant,
"BYRON.

"Ravenna, 8bre 14°, 1820.

"P.S.—I perceive that in Germany, as well as in Italy, there is a great struggle about what they call '*Classical*' and '*Romantic*,'—terms which were not subjects of classification in England, at least when I left it four or five years ago. Some of the English Scribblers, it is true, abused Pope and Swift, but the reason was that they themselves did not know how to write either prose or verse; but nobody thought them worth making a sect of. Perhaps there may be something of the kind sprung up lately, but I have not heard much about it, and it would be such bad taste that I shall be very sorry to believe it."

Another Dedication, to be prefixed to a Second Edition of the play was found amongst Byron's papers. It remained in MS. till 1832,

* [See an article on Goethe's *Aus Meinem Leben*, etc., in the *Edinburgh Review* for June, 1816, vol. xxvi. pp. 304–337.]

when it was included in a prefatory note to *Marino Faliero*, *Works of Lord Byron*, 1832, xii. 50.

"DEDICATION OF *MARINO FALIERO*.

"To the Honourable Douglas Kinnaird.

"MY DEAR DOUGLAS,—I dedicate to you the following tragedy, rather on account of your good opinion of it, than from any notion of my own that it may be worthy of your acceptance. But if its merits were ten times greater than they possibly can be, this offering would still be a very inadequate acknowledgment of the active and steady friendship with which, for a series of years, you have honoured your obliged and affectionate friend,

"BYRON.

"Ravenna, Sept. 1st, 1821."]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*
BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*
LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*
BENINTENDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*
MICHEL STENO, *One of the three Capi of the Forty.*
ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *Chief of the Arsenal,*
PHILIP CALENDARO,
DAGOLINO,
BERTRAM,
} *Conspirators.*

Signor of the Night, { "*Signore di Notte,*" *one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.*

First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Third Citizen.
VINCENZO,
PIETRO,
BATTISTA,
} *Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.*

Secretary of the Council of Ten.
Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, The Council of Ten, the Giunta, etc., etc.

WOMEN.

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*
MARIANNA, *her Friend.*

Female Attendants, etc.

Scene VENICE—in the year 1355.

MARINO FALIERO,

DOGE OF VENICE.

(AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.)

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.*

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to* BATTISTA.

Pie. Is not the messenger returned?[i]
Bat. Not yet;
I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the Signory[1] is deep in council,
And long debate on Steno's accusation.
Pie. Too long—at least so thinks the Doge.
Bat. How bears he
These moments of suspense?
Pie. With struggling patience.[ii]
Placed at the Ducal table, covered o'er
With all the apparel of the state—petitions,
Despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,—
He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er[iii]

i. *Are none yet of the Messengers returned?*—[*MS. M.*]
ii. *With seeming patience.*—[*MS. M.*]
iii. *He sits as deep* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. [The *Consiglio Minore*, which originally consisted of the Doge and his six councillors, was afterwards increased, by the addition of the three *Capi* of the *Quarantia Criminale*, and was known as the *Serenissima Signoria* (G. Cappelletti, *Storia della Repubblica di Venezia*, 1850, i. 483). The Forty who were "debating on Steno's accusation" could not be described as the "Signory."]

He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,[i]
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turned a leaf.

Bat. 'Tis said he is much moved,—and doubtless 'twas
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

Pie. Aye, if a poor man: Steno's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.[ii]

Bat. Then you think
He will not be judged hardly?

Pie. 'Twere enough
He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

Bat. And here it comes.—What news, Vincenzo?

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. 'Tis
Decided; but as yet his doom's unknown:
I saw the President in act to seal
The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Ducal Chamber.*

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his Nephew*, BERTUCCIO FALIERO.[1]

Ber. F. It cannot be but they will do you justice.

Doge. Aye, such as the Avogadori[2] did,

i. *Or aught that imitates* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *Young, gallant* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Bertuccio Faliero was a distant connection of the Doge, not his nephew. Matters of business and family affairs seem to have brought them together, and it is evident that they were on intimate terms.—*La Congiura*, p. 84.]

2. [The Avogadori, three in number, were the conductors of criminal prosecutions on the part of the State; and no act of the councils was valid, unless sanctioned by the presence of one of them; but they were

Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.
Ber. F. His peers will scarce protect him; such an act
Would bring contempt on all authority.
Doge. Know you not Venice? Know you not the Forty?
But we shall see anon.
Ber. F. (*addressing* VINCENZO, *then entering*). How now—what tidings?
Vin. I am charged to tell his Highness that the court
Has passed its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The Prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptation of their duty.
Doge. Yes—
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is passed, you say?
Vin. It is, your Highness:
The President was sealing it, when I
Was called in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due
Not only to the Chief of the Republic,
But the complainant, both in one united.
Ber. F. Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?
Vin. No, my Lord; you know
The secret custom of the courts in Venice.
Ber. F. True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men—most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious—this I grant—
And secret as the grave to which they doom

not, as Byron seems to imply, a court of first instance. The implied reproach that they preferred to send the case to appeal because Steno was a member of the "Quarantia," is based on an error of Sanudo's (*vide ante*, p. 333).]

The guilty: but with all this, in their aspects—
At least in some, the juniors of the number—
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.
Vin. My Lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which passed among the judges, even in seeming;
My station near the accused too, Michel Steno,
Made me——
Doge (*abruptly*). And how looked *he?* deliver that.
Vin. Calm, but not overcast, he stood resigned
To the decree, whate'er it were;—but lo!
It comes, for the perusal of his Highness.

Enter the SECRETARY *of the Forty.*

Sec. The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,[1]
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His Highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence passed on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraigned upon the charge
Contained, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.
Doge. Retire, and wait without.
[*Exeunt* SECRETARY *and* VINCENZO.
Take thou this paper:
The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.
Ber. F. Patience, my dear Uncle:
Why do you tremble thus?—nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wished.
Doge. Say on.
Ber. F. (*reading*). "Decreed
In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of Carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne
The following words——"[1]

1. —— *Marin! Faliere* [*sic*].—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["Marin Faliero, dalla bella moglie—altri la gode, ed egli la

Doge. Would'st thou repeat them?
Would'st *thou* repeat them—*thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonoured in its Chief—that Chief the Prince
Of Venice, first of cities?—To the sentence.
Ber. F. Forgive me, my good Lord; I will obey—
(*Reads*) "That Michel Steno be detained a month
In close arrest." [1]
Doge. Proceed.
Ber. F. My Lord, 'tis finished.
Doge. How say you?—finished! Do I dream?—'tis false—
Give me the paper—(*snatches the paper and reads*)—
"'Tis decreed in council
That Michel Steno"——Nephew, thine arm!
Ber. F. Nay,
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncalled for—
Let me seek some assistance.
Doge. Stop, sir—Stir not—
'Tis past.
Ber. F. I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence;
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even

mantien."—Marino Sanuto, *Vitæ Ducum Venetorum*, *apud* Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 1733, xxii. 628–635). Navagero, in his *Storia della Repubblica Veneziana*, *ibid.*, xxiii. 1040, gives a coarser rendering of Steno's lampoon—"Becco Marino Falier dalla bella mogier;" and there are older versions agreeing in the main with that recorded by Sanudo. It is, however, extremely doubtful whether Faliero's conspiracy was, in any sense, the outcome of a personal insult. The story of the lampoon first appears in the Chronicle of Lorenzo de Monaci, who wrote in the latter half of the fifteenth century. "Fama fuit . . . quia aliqui adolescentuli nobiles scripserunt in angulis interioris palatii aliqua verba ignominiosa, et quod ipse (il Doge) magis incanduit quoniam adolescentuli illi parva fuerant animadversione puniti." In course of time the "noble youths" became a single noble youth, whose name occurred in the annals, and the derivation or evolution of the "verba ignominiosa," followed by a natural process.—*La Congiura*, *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1897, tom. xiii. pt. ii. p. 347.]

1. [Sanudo gives two versions of Steno's punishment: (1) that he should be imprisoned for two months, and banished from Venice for a year; (2) that he should be imprisoned for one month, flogged with a fox's tail, and pay one hundred lire to the Republic.]

To them, as being your subjects; but 'tis not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good Uncle? why do you stand
So fixed? You heed me not:—I pray you, hear me!

Doge (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to trample upon it, exclaims, as he is withheld by his nephew*). Oh! that the Saracen were in St. Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.

Ber. F. For the sake
Of Heaven and all its saints, my Lord——

Doge. Away!
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara[1]
Were ranged around the palace!

Ber. F. 'Tis not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.

Doge. Venice' Duke!
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.

Ber. F. If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice——

Doge (*interrupting him*). There is no such thing—
It is a word—nay, worse—a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wronged, outraged, helpless wretch,
Who begs his bread, if 'tis refused by one,
May win it from another kinder heart;
But he, who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar—he's a slave—
And that am I—and thou—and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us:—where is our redress?

Ber. F. The law, my Prince——

1. [*Vide ante*, p. 331.]

Doge (*interrupting him*). You see what it has done;
I asked no remedy but from the law—[1]
I sought no vengeance but redress by law—
I called no judges but those named by law—
As Sovereign, I appealed unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me Sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel—toil—the perils—the fatigues—
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weighed i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician—and found wanting!
And this is to be borne!

Ber. F. I say not that:—
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.

Doge. Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?
The nephew of a Doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well—we must be humble now.

Ber. F. My princely Uncle! you are too much moved;—
I grant it was a gross offence, and grossly
Left without fitting punishment: but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wronged,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We'll take it; but may do all this in calmness—
Deep Vengeance is the daughter of deep Silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its Chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor—
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me

1. [Faliero's appeal to the "law" is a violation of "historical accuracy." The penalty for an injury to the Doge was not fixed by law, but was decided from time to time by the Judge, in accordance with unwritten custom.—*La Congiura*, p. 60.]

To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.
Doge. I tell thee—*must* I tell thee—what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend?
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul—
No pride—no passion—no deep sense of honour?
Ber. F. 'Tis the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other sceptic.
Doge. You know the full offence of this born villain,
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,[i]
And on the honour of—Oh God! my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villainous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polished guise,
Whispered the tale, and smiled upon the lie
Which made me look like them—a courteous wittol,
Patient—aye—proud, it may be, of dishonour.
Ber. F. But still it was a lie—you knew it false,
And so did all men.
Doge. Nephew, the high Roman
Said, "Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,"[1]
And put her from him.
Ber. F. True—but in those days——
Doge. What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian Prince must bear? old Dandolo[ii]
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,[2]
And wore the ducal cap *I* trample on—

i. *Who threw his sting into a poisonous rhyme.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. —— *Enrico.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [For the story of Cæsar, Pompeia, and Clodius, see Plutarch's *Lives*, "Cæsar," Langhorne's translation, 1838, p. 498.]
2. [According to Sanudo (*Vitæ Ducum Venetorum, apud* Muratori, *Rerum Ital. Script.*, 1733, xxii. 529), it was Ser Pantaleone Barbo who intervened, when (A.D. 1204) the election to the Empire of Constantinople lay between the Doge "Arrigo Dandolo" and "Conte Baldovino di Fiandra."]

Because 'tis now degraded.
Ber. F. 'Tis even so.
Doge. It is—it is;—I did not visit on
The innocent creature thus most vilely slandered
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces;—I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him—
Who hath a name whose honour's all to him,
When these are tainted by the accursing breath
Of Calumny and Scorn.
Ber. F. And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment?
Doge. Death! Was I not the Sovereign of the state—
Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey me?
Was I not injured as a husband? scorned
As man? reviled, degraded, as a Prince?
Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason?—and he lives!
Had he instead of on the Doge's throne
Stamped the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
His blood had gilt the threshold; for the carle
Had stabbed him on the instant.
Ber. F. Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset—leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.
Doge. Hold, nephew: this
Would have sufficed but yesterday; at present
I have no further wrath against this man.
Ber. F. What mean you? is not the offence redoubled
By this most rank—I will not say—acquittal;
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunished?
Doge. It *is redoubled*, but not now by him:

The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest—
We must obey the Forty.
Ber. F. Obey *them!*
Who have forgot their duty to the Sovereign?
Doge. Why, yes;—boy, you perceive it then at last:
Whether as fellow citizen who sues
For justice, or as Sovereign who commands it,
They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the Sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head—he shall not wear it long.
Ber. F. Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
The mode and means; if you had calmly heard me,
I never meant this miscreant should escape,
But wished you to suppress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off
Doge. No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now—a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden time[1]
Some sacrifices asked a single victim,
Great expiations had a hecatomb.
Ber. F. Your wishes are my law: and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.
Doge. Fear not; you shall have time and place of proof:
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now;
I pray you, pardon me.
Ber. F. Why, that's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!
I wondered to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury at these years,
Although the cause——
Doge. Aye—think upon the cause—
Forget it not:—When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between

1. —— *in olden days.*—[*MS. M.*]

The Sun and you, as an ill-omened cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me;—but speak not, stir not,—
Leave all to me; we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part.—But now retire,
'Tis fit I were alone.

Ber. F. (*taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table*). Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurned,
Till you can change it—haply, for a crown!
And now I take my leave, imploring you
In all things to rely upon my duty,
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge (*solus*). Adieu, my worthy nephew.—Hollow bauble! [*Taking up the ducal cap.*
Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,
Without investing the insulted brow
With the all-swaying majesty of Kings;
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [*Puts it on.*
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
Which in this hundred-handed Senate rules,
Making the people nothing, and the Prince
A pageant? In my life I have achieved
Tasks not less difficult—achieved for them,
Who thus repay me! Can I not requite them?
Oh for one year! Oh! but for even a day
Of my full youth, while yet my body served
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord,
I would have dashed amongst them, asking few
In aid to overthrow these swoln patricians;
But now I must look round for other hands
To serve this hoary head; but it shall plan
In such a sort as will not leave the task
Herculean, though as yet 'tis but a chaos
Of darkly brooding thoughts: my fancy is

In her first work, more nearly to the light
Holding the sleeping images of things
For the selection of the pausing judgment.—
The troops are few in——

Enter VINCENZO.

Vin. There is one without
Craves audience of your Highness.
Doge. I'm unwell—
I can see no one, not even a patrician—
Let him refer his business to the Council.
Vin. My Lord, I will deliver your reply;
It cannot much import—he's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.
Doge. How! did you say the patron of a galley?[1]
That is—I mean—a servant of the state:
Admit him, he may be on public service.
[*Exit* VINCENZO.
Doge (*solus*). This patron may be sounded; I will try him.
I know the people to be discontented:
They have cause, since Sapienza's[2] adverse day,
When Genoa conquered: they have further cause,
Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing—mere machines,
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,

1. [According to the much earlier, and, presumably, more historical narrative of Lorenzo de Monaci, Bertuccio Isarello was not chief of the *Arsenalotti*, but simply the patron, that is the owner, of a vessel (*paron di nave*), and consequently a person of importance amongst sailors and naval artisans; and the noble who strikes the fatal blow is not Barbaro, but a certain Giovanni Dandolo, who is known, at that time, to have been "*sopracomito* and *consigliere del capitano da mar.*" If the Admiral of the Arsenal had been engaged in the conspiracy, the fact could hardly have escaped the notice of contemporary chroniclers. Signor Lazzarino suggests that the name Gisello, or Girello, which has been substituted for that of Israel Bertuccio, is a corruption of Isarello.—*La Congiura*, p. 74.]

2. [The island of Sapienza lies about nine miles to the north-west of Capo Gallo, in the Morea. The battle in which the Venetians under Nicolò Pisani were defeated by the Genoese under Paganino Doria was fought November 4, 1354. (See *Venice, an Historical Sketch*, by Horatio F. Brown, 1893, p. 201.)]

And murmur deeply—any hope of change
Will draw them forward: they shall pay themselves
With plunder:—but the priests—I doubt the priesthood
Will not be with us; they have hated me
Since that rash hour, when, maddened with the drone,
I smote the tardy Bishop at Treviso,[1]
Quickening his holy march; yet, ne'ertheless,
They may be won, at least their Chief at Rome,
By some well-timed concessions; but, above
All things, I must be speedy: at my hour
Of twilight little light of life remains.
Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,
Better that sixty of my fourscore years
Had been already where—how soon, I care not—
The whole must be extinguished;—better that
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
Let me consider—of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at——

Enter VINCENZO *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Vin. May it please
Your Highness, the same patron whom I spake of
Is here to crave your patience.
Doge. Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo.— [*Exit* VINCENZO.
Sir, you may advance—what would you?
I. Ber. Redress.
Doge. Of whom?
I. Ber. Of God and of the Doge.
Doge. Alas! my friend, you seek it of the twain
Of least respect and interest in Venice.
You must address the Council.
I. Ber. 'Twere in vain;

1. An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's *Lives of the Doges.*
["Sanuto says that Heaven took away his senses for this buffet, and induced him to conspire:—'Però fu permesso che il Faliero perdesse l'intelletto.'"—*B. Letters* (*Works, etc.*, 1832, xii. 82, *note* 1).]

For he who injured me is one of them.

Doge. There's blood upon thy face — how came it there?

I. Ber. 'Tis mine, and not the first I've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.

Doge. Doth he live?

I. Ber. Not long—
But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My Prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself:—if not—
I say no more.

Doge. But something you would do—
Is it not so?

I. Ber. I am a man, my Lord.

Doge. Why so is he who smote you.

I. Ber. He is called so;
Nay, more, a noble one—at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn—
'Tis said the worm will.

Doge. Say—his name and lineage?

I. Ber. Barbaro.

Doge. What was the cause? or the pretext?

I. Ber. I am the chief of the arsenal,[1] employed
At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro[2]

1. ["The number of their constant Workmen is 1200; and all these Artificers have a Superior Officer called *Amiraglio*, who commands the *Bucentaure* on Ascension Day, when the Duke goes in state to marry the sea. And here we cannot but notice, that by a ridiculous custom this Admiral makes himself Responsible to the *Senat* for the inconstancy of the Sea, and engages his Life there shall be no Tempest that day. 'Tis this Admiral who has the Guard of the Palais, St. Mark, with his *Arsenalotti*, during the *interregnum*. He carries the Red Standard before the Prince when he makes his Entry, by virtue of which office he has his Cloak, and the two Basons (out of which the Duke throws the money to the People) for his fee."—*The History of the Government of Venice*, written in the year 1675, by the Sieur Amelott de la Houssaie, London, 1677, p. 63.]

2. [*Vide ante*, p. 356, *note* 1.]

Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree: I dared
To justify the men—he raised his hand;—
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flowed
Dishonourably.
Doge. Have you long time served?
I. Ber. So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the Chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero.—
Doge. How! are we comrades?—the State's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;
So that I recognised you not. Who placed you?
I. Ber. The late Doge; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct me
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff;
At least, in such a cause.
Doge. Are you much hurt?
I. Ber. Irreparably in my self-esteem.
Doge. Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,
What would you do to be revenged on this man?
I. Ber. That which I dare not name, and yet will do.
Doge. Then wherefore came you here?
I. Ber. I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, filled the ducal throne,
This blood had been washed out in other blood.
Doge. You come to me for justice—unto *me!*
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it—'twas denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago!
I. Ber. How says your Highness?
Doge. Steno is condemned
To a month's confinement.

I. Ber. What! the same who dared
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?
Doge. Aye, doubtless they have echoed o'er the arsenal,
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink,
As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley-slave,
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard like the Doge.
I. Ber. Is't possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?
Doge. You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then
You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,
Who passed the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.
I. Ber. Ah! dared I speak my feelings!
Doge. Give them breath.
Mine have no further outrage to endure.
I. Ber. Then, in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge—I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am?—
But the base insult done your state and person.
Doge. You overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This Cap is not the Monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.
I. Ber. Wouldst thou be King?
Doge. Yes—of a happy people.
I. Ber. Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?
Doge. Aye,
If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic Hydra,[1]

1. [The famous measure known as the closing of the Great Council was carried into force during the Dogeship (1289–1311) of Pietro Gradenigo. On the last day of February, 1297, a law was proposed

The poisonous heads of whose envenomed body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

I. Ber. Yet, thou wast born, and still hast lived, patrician.

Doge. In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toiled a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the Senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, aye, and conquered;
Have made and marred peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My fathers' and my birthplace, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,
It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripped her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She'd tell thee 'twas for *all* her little ones.

I. Ber. And yet they made thee Duke.

Doge. *They made* me so;
I sought it not, the flattering fetters met me

and passed, "That the Council of Forty are to ballot, one by one, the names of all those who during the last four years have had a seat in the Great Council. . . . Three electors shall be chosen to submit names of fresh candidates for the Great Council, on the . . . approval of the Doge." But strict as these provisions were, they did not suffice to restrict the government to the aristocracy. It was soon decreed "that only those who could prove that a paternal ancestor had sat on the Great Council, after its creation in 1176, should now be eligible as members. . . . It is in this provision that we find the essence of the *Serrata del Maggior Consiglio*. . . . The work was not completed at one stroke. . . . In 1315 a list of all those who were eligible . . . was compiled. The scrutiny . . . was entrusted to the *Avogadori di Comun*, and became . . . more and more severe. To ensure the purity of blood, they opened a register of marriages and births. . . . Thus the aristocracy proceeded to construct itself more and more upon a purely oligarchical basis."—*Venice, an Historical Sketch*, by Horatio F. Brown, 1893, pp. 162–164.]

Returning from my Roman embassy,
And never having hitherto refused
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,
At these late years, decline what was the highest
Of all in seeming, but of all most base
In what we have to do and to endure:
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
When I can neither right myself nor thee.
I. Ber. You shall do both, if you possess the will;
And many thousands more not less oppressed,
Who wait but for a signal—will you give it?
Doge. You speak in riddles.
I. Ber. Which shall soon be read
At peril of my life—if you disdain not
To lend a patient ear.
Doge. Say on.
I. Ber. Not thou,
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemned and trampled on; but the whole people
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs:
The foreign soldiers in the Senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners, and civic troops,
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst them
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
Have not partook[1] oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless war
Against the Genoese, which is still maintained
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further:
Even now—but, I forget that speaking thus,
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!
Doge. And suffering what thou hast done—fear'st thou death?
Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.
I. Ber. No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge

1. [To "partake" this or that is an obsolete construction, but rests on the authority of Dryden and other writers of the period. Byron's "have partook" cannot come under the head of "good, sterling, genuine English"! (See letter to Murray, October 8, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 89.)]

Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.

Doge. From me fear nothing; out with it!

I. Ber. Know then, that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her walls.
They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms, and means,
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

Doge. For what then do they pause?

I. Ber. An hour to strike.

Doge (*aside*). Saint Mark's shall strike that hour![1]

I. Ber. I now have placed
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,
Be our Chief now—our Sovereign hereafter.

Doge. How many are ye?

I. Ber. I'll not answer that
Till I am answered.

Doge. How, sir! do you menace?

I. Ber. No; I affirm. I have betrayed myself;
But there's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, the "leaden roofs,"
To force a single name from me of others.
The Pozzi[2] and the Piombi were in vain;

1. [The bells of San Marco were never rung but by order of the Doge. One of the pretexts for ringing this alarm was to have been an announcement of the appearance of a Genoese fleet off the Lagune. According to Sanudo, "on the appointed day they [the followers of the sixteen leaders of the conspiracy] were to make affrays amongst themselves, here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco." (See, too, *Sketches from Venetian History*, 1831, i. 266, *note*.)]

2. ["Le Conseil des Dix avait ses prisons spéciales dites *camerotti*;

They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
And I would pass the fearful "Bridge of Sighs,"
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
Between the murderers and the murdered, washing
The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on't, and avenge me.

Doge. If such your power and purpose, why come here
To sue for justice, being in the course
To do yourself due right?

I. Ber. Because the man,
Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,
A moody brow and muttered threats had made me
A marked man to the Forty's inquisition;
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be feared,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.

Doge. What was that?

I. Ber. Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved
By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
Had reached me. I had served you, honoured you,
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
Being of an order of such spirits, as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 'twas
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,
My peril be the proof.

celles non officiellement appelées les *pozzi* et les *piombi*, les puits et les plombs, étaient de son redoubtable domaine. Les *Camerotti di sotto* (les puits) étaient obscurs mais non accessibles à l'eau du canal, comme on l'a fait croire en des récits dignes d'Anne Radcliffe; les *camerotti di sopra* (les plombs) étaient des cellules fortement doublées de bois mais non privées de lumière."—*Les Archives de Venise*, par Armand Baschet, 1870, p. 535. For the *pozzi* and the "Bridge of Sighs" see note by Hobhouse, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 465; and compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza i. line 1 (and *The Two Foscari*, act iv. sc. 1), *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 327, *note* 2.]

Doge. You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly win:
Thus far I'll answer you—your secret's safe.
I. Ber. And is this all?
Doge. Unless with all intrusted,
What would you have me answer?
I. Ber. I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.
Doge. But I must know your plan, your names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the former
Matured and strengthened.
I. Ber. We're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.
Doge. But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.
I. Ber. That shall be done upon your formal pledge
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.
Doge. When? where?
I. Ber. This night I'll bring to your apartment
Two of the principals: a greater number
Were hazardous.
Doge. Stay, I must think of this.—
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
And leave the palace?
I. Ber. You must come alone.
Doge. With but my nephew.
I. Ber. Not were he your son!
Doge. Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in arms
At Sapienza[1] for this faithless state.
Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive ere I be ashes!
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.
I. Ber. Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

1. [For "Sapienza," *vide ante*, p. 356. According to the genealogies, Marin Falier, by his first wife, had a daughter Lucia, who was married to Franceschino Giustiniani; but there is no record of a son. (See *La Congiura*, p. 21.)]

Doge. The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?
I. Ber. At midnight I will be alone and masked
Where'er your Highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.
Doge. At what hour arises
The moon?
I. Ber. Late, but the atmosphere is thick and dusky,
'Tis a sirocco.
Doge. At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires;[1] the same,
Twin-named from the apostles John and Paul;
A gondola,[2] with one oar only, will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.
I. Ber. I will not fail.
Doge. And now retire——
I. Ber. In the full hope your Highness will not falter
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.
[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.
Doge (*solus*). At midnight, by the church Saints John and Paul,
Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair—
To what? to hold a council in the dark
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,
Where lie two Doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they could!

1. ["The Doges were all *buried* in *St. Mark's before* Faliero: it is singular that when his predecessor, *Andrea Dandolo*, died, the Ten made a law that *all* the *future Doges* should be *buried with their families in their own churches,—one would think by a kind of presentiment.* So that all that is said of his *Ancestral Doges*, as buried at St. John's and Paul's, is altered from the fact, *they being in St. Mark's. Make a note* of this, and put *Editor* as the subscription to it. As I make such pretensions to accuracy, I should not like to be *twitted* even with such trifles on that score. Of the play they may say what they please, but not so of my costume and *dram. pers.*—they having been real existences."—Letter to Murray, October 12, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 95. Byron's injunction was not carried out till 1832.]

2. A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though, of course, not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy; and, since the decay of Venice, of economy.

For I should rest in honour with the honoured.
Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles; but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
By sweet revenge on all that's base in Venice,
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of Time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Catiline,
By the true touchstone of desert—Success.[1]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.*

ANGIOLINA [2] (*wife of the* DOGE) *and* MARIANNA.

Ang. What was the Doge's answer?
Mar. That he was

1. ["What Gifford says (of the first act) is very consolatory. 'English, sterling *genuine English*,' is a desideratum amongst you, and I am glad that I have got so much left; though Heaven knows how I retain it: I *hear* none but from my Valet, and his is *Nottinghamshire;* and I *see* none but in your new publications, and theirs is *no* language at all, but jargon. . . . Gifford says that it is 'good, sterling, genuine English,' and Foscolo says that the characters are right Venetian."—Letters to Murray, Sept. 11, Oct. 8, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 75–89.]

2. [Byron admits (*vide ante*, p. 340) that the character of the "Dogaressa" is more or less his own creation. It may be remarked that in Casimir Delavigne's version of the story, the Duchess (Elena) cherishes a secret and criminal attachment for Bertuccio Faliero, and that in Mr. Swinburne's tragedy, while innocent in act, she is smitten with remorse for a passion which overmasters her loyalty to her husband. Byron's Angiolina is "faultily faultless, . . . splendidly null."

In a letter to Murray, dated January 4, 1821 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 218), he says, "As I think that *love* is not the principal passion for tragedy, you will not find me a popular writer. Unless it is Love, *furious*, *criminal*, and *hapless* [as in *The Mysterious Mother*, or in Alfieri's *Mirra*, or Shelley's *Cenci*], it ought not to make a tragic subject. When it is melting and maudlin, it *does*, but it ought not to do; it is then for the gallery and second-price boxes." It is probable that he owed these sentiments to the theory and practice of Vittorio Alfieri. "It is extraordinary," writes M. de Fallette Barrol (*Monthly Magazine*,

That moment summoned to a conference;
But 'tis by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the Senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.
Ang. Would he were returned!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourished by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay—Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of Eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
Have nothing of old age;[1] and his bold brow
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have power

April, 1805, reprinted in Preface to *Tragedie di Alfieri*, A. Montucci, Edinburgh, 1805, i. xvi. *sq.*), "that a man whose soul possessed an uncommon share of ardour and sensibility, and had experienced all the violence of the passions, should scarcely have condescended to introduce love into his tragedies; or, when he does, that he should only employ it with a kind of reserve and severity. . . . He probably regarded it as a hackneyed agent; for in . . . *Myrrha* it appears in such a strange character, that all the art of the writer is not capable of divesting it of an air at once ludicrous and disgusting."

But apart from the example of Alfieri, there was another motive at work—a determination to prove to the world that he was the master of his own temperament, and that, if he chose, he could cast away frivolity and cynicism, and clothe himself with austerity "as with a garment." He had been taken to task for "treating well-nigh with equal derision the most pure of virtues, and the most odious of vices" (*Blackwood's Edin. Mag.*, August, 1819), and here was an "answer to his accusers!"]

1. [The exact date of Marin Falier's birth is a matter of conjecture, but there is reason to believe that he was under seventy-five years of age at the time of the conspiracy. The date assigned is 1280–1285 A.D.]

Upon his troubled spirit.
Mar. It is true,
His Highness has of late been greatly moved
By the affront of Steno, and with cause:
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doomed to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood.
Ang. 'Twas a gross insult; but I heed it not
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression
Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere—austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.
Mar. Assuredly
The Doge can not suspect you?
Ang. Suspect *me!*
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawled his lie,
Grovelling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
His own still conscience smote him for the act,
And every shadow on the walls frowned shame
Upon his coward calumny.
Mar. 'Twere fit
He should be punished grievously.
Ang. He is so.
Mar. What! is the sentence passed? is he condemned?[i.]
Ang. I know not that, but he has been detected.
Mar. And deem you this enough for such foul scorn?
Ang. I would not be a judge in my own cause,
Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;
But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.
Mar. Some sacrifice is due to slandered virtue.
Ang. Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim?
Or if it must depend upon men's words?

i. —— *has he been doomed?*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

The dying Roman said, "'twas but a name:"[1]
It were indeed no more, if human breath
Could make or mar it.
Mar. Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.
Ang. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazoned forth;
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.
Mar. You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.
Ang. And yet they were my father's; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.
Mar. You want none;
Wife to a Prince, the Chief of the Republic.
Ang. I should have sought none though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestowed my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.
Mar. And with that hand did he bestow your heart?
Ang. He did so, or it had not been bestowed.
Mar. Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.
Ang. The world will think with worldlings; but my heart
Has still been in my duties, which are many,

1. [According to Dio Cassius, the last words of Brutus were, Ὦ τλῆμον ἀρετή, λόγος ἄρ' ἦσθ' [ἄλλως], ἐγὼ δέ σε ὡς ἔργων ἤσκουν· σὺ δ' ἄρ' ἐδούλευες τύχῃ.—*Hist. Rom.*, lib. xlvii. c. 49, ed. v., P. Boissevain, 1898, ii. 246.]

But never difficult.

Mar. And do you love him?

Ang. I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestowed my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous; rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride,
And the deep passions fiercely fostered by
The uses of patricians, and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
A duty to a certain sign, a vice
When overstrained, and this I fear in him.
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
Yet tempered by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavished all its chief employs upon him,
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the Dukedom met him.

Mar. But previous to this marriage, had your heart
Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to match
Beauty like yours? or, since, have you ne'er seen
One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

Ang. I answered your first question when I said
I married.

Mar. And the second?

Ang. Needs no answer.

Mar. I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

Ang. I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
Or aught save their past choice.

Mar. 'Tis their past choice
That far too often makes them deem they would
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.
Ang. It may be so. I knew not of such thoughts.
Mar. Here comes the Doge—shall I retire?
Ang. It may
Be better you should quit me; he seems rapt
In thought.—How pensively he takes his way!
[*Exit* MARIANNA.

Enter the DOGE *and* PIETRO.

Doge (*musing*). There is a certain Philip Calendaro
Now in the Arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades:
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,
Sudden and daring, and yet secret; 'twould
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But fain would be——
Pie. My Lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and enquire your pleasure
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.
Doge. At sunset.—Stay a moment—let me see—
Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.
Ang. My Lord!
Doge. My dearest child, forgive me—why delay
So long approaching me?—I saw you not.
Ang. You were absorbed in thought, and he who now
Has parted from you might have words of weight
To bear you from the Senate.
Doge. From the Senate?
Ang. I would not interrupt him in his duty
And theirs.
Doge. The Senate's duty! you mistake;
'Tis we who owe all service to the Senate.
Ang. I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.
Doge. He shall.—But let that pass.—We will be jocund.

How fares it with you? have you been abroad?
The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;
Or have you held a levee of your friends?
Or has your music made you solitary?
Say—is there aught that you would will within
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 'tis done.

Ang. You're ever kind to me.
I have nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

Doge. Calmer?

Ang. Aye, calmer, my good Lord.—Ah, why
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,
As not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

Doge. Disclose too much!—of what?
What is there to disclose?

Ang. A heart so ill
At ease.

Doge. 'Tis nothing, child.—But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within—'tis this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

Ang. Yet this existed long before, and never
Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me; there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have rendered light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'Tis not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you,—
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climbed up to the pinnacle of power

And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unaltered brow:
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.
Doge. Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.
Ang. Yes—the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets
Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.
Doge. I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart—— But let us change the theme.
Ang. Ah no!—As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,
You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfixed your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.
Doge. To what I was!—have you heard Steno's sentence?
Ang. No.
Doge. A month's arrest.
Ang. Is it not enough?
Doge. Enough!—yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a Lady's and a Prince's honour
Even on the throne of his authority.
Ang. There seems to be enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.
Doge. Such men have no honour;

They have but their vile lives—and these are spared.
Ang. You would not have him die for this offence?
Doge. Not *now*:—being still alive, I'd have him live
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damned his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.
Ang. Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.
Doge. Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That makes such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour,—
And, less than honour, for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is't nothing to have filled these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stained your name and mine—the noblest names?
Is't nothing to have brought into contempt
A Prince before his people? to have failed
In the respect accorded by Mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?
To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours?—But let them look to it who have saved him.
Ang. Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.
Doge. Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is there not Hell
For wrath eternal?[i.1]
Ang. Do not speak thus wildly—[ii.]
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.
Doge. Amen! May Heaven forgive them!
Ang. And will you?
Doge. Yes, when they are in Heaven!
Ang. And not till then?

i. *Doth Heaven forgive her own? is Satan saved?*
But be it so?—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *Oh do not speak thus rashly.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
1. [There is no MS. authority for "From wrath eternal."]

Doge. What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorned, spurned, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment, both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long;
But let us change the argument.—My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deemed
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame!—Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, *any* husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!

Ang. I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

Doge. 'Tis well,
And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.

Ang. Why speak you thus?

Doge. It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.

Ang. Why should you doubt it? has it ever failed?

Doge. Come hither, child! I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal Fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when, oppressed
With his last malady, he willed our union,
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils,
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
A lonely and undowered maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
Which soothed his death-bed.

Ang. I have not forgotten

The nobleness with which you bade me speak
If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor your offer
To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.
Doge. Thus,
'Twas not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of agéd appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I swayed such passions; nor was this my age
Infected with that leprosy of lust[1]
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanished joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
Your father's choice.
Ang. I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and Heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.
Doge. I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years,
Inheriting a Prince's name and riches,
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right; my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,

1. ["Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust."
'Tis Pity she's a Whore, by John Ford.
Lamb's *Dramatic Poets*, 1835, i. 265.]

And not less truly in a faithful heart.
Ang. My Lord, I looked but to my father's wishes,
Hallowed by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er crossed my dreams; and should
The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.
Doge. I do believe you; and I know you true:
For Love—romantic Love—which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes,—
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As Youth is apt in, so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct;
A trust in you; a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage; friendship, faith,—
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.
Ang. And have ever had.
Doge. I think so. For the difference in our years
You knew it choosing me, and chose; I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five and twentieth spring;
I trusted to the blood of Loredano[1]
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you—to the truths your father taught you—
To your belief in Heaven—to your mild virtues—
To your own faith and honour, for my own.
Ang. You have done well.—I thank you for that trust,

1. [The Dogaressa Aluica was the daughter of Nicolò Gradenigo. It was the Doge who inherited the "blood of Loredano" through his mother Beriola.]

Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.
Doge. Where is Honour,
Innate and precept-strengthened, 'tis the rock
Of faith connubial: where it is not—where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's God
In all his marble-chiselled beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman Manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and Virtue cannot change.
The once fall'n woman must for ever fall;
For Vice must have variety, while Virtue
Stands like the Sun, and all which rolls around
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.
Ang. And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others,
(I pray you pardon me;) but wherefore yield you
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
Of such a thing as Steno?
Doge. You mistake me.
It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should——but let that pass.
Ang. What is't you feel so deeply, then, even now?
Doge. The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her Lord and laws.
Ang. Alas! why will you thus consider it?
Doge. I have thought on't till——but let me lead you back
To what I urged; all these things being noted,
I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to praise:
You had all freedom—all respect—all trust

From me and mine; and, born of those who made
Princes at home, and swept Kings from their thrones
On foreign shores, in all things you appeared
Worthy to be our first of native dames.
Ang. To what does this conduct?
Doge. To thus much—that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all—
A villain, whom for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion
By blackening publicly his Sovereign's consort,
And be absolved by his upright compeers.
Ang. But he has been condemned into captivity.
Doge. For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I've done with him;
The rest must be with you.
Ang. With me, my Lord?
Doge. Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll (*giving her a paper*)——Fear not; they are for your advantage:
Read them hereafter at the fitting hour.
Ang. My Lord, in life, and after life, you shall
Be honoured still by me: but may your days
Be many yet—and happier than the present!
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be—what you were.
Doge. I will be what I should be, or be nothing;

But never more—oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet Quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toiled
To make my country honoured. As her servant—
Her servant, though her chief—I would have gone
Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me.
Would I had died at Zara!

Ang. There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day,
Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

Doge. But one such day occurs within an age;
My life is little less than one, and 'tis
Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favoured citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day—
Then why should I remember it?—Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet;
There's much for me to do—and the hour hastens.[1]

Ang. Remember what you were.

Doge. It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While Sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

Ang. At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that Nature would o'erpower

1. [The lines "and the hour hastens" to "whate'er may urge" are not in the MS.]

At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus.
An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshened strength.
Doge. I cannot—
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few—
Yet a few days and dream-perturbéd nights,
And I shall slumber well—but where?—no matter.
Adieu, my Angiolina.
Ang. Let me be
An instant—yet an instant your companion!
I cannot bear to leave you thus.
Doge. Come then,
My gentle child—forgive me: thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where Death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.[i]
When I am gone—it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within—above—around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war,—
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember.
Let us begone, my child—the time is pressing. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*A retired spot near the Arsenal.*

Israel Bertuccio *and* Philip Calendaro.[1]

Cal. How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?
I. Ber. Why, well.

i. *Where Death sits throned* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Filippo Calendario, who is known to have been one of the principal conspirators, was a master stone-cutter, who worked as a sculptor, and ranked as such. The tradition, to which Byron does not allude, that he was an architect, and designed the new palace begun in 1354, may probably be traced to a document of the fifteenth century, in which Calendario is described as *commissario*, *i.e.* executor, of Piero Basejo, who worked as a master stone-cutter for the Republic. The *Maggior Consiglio* was its own architect, and would not have empowered a

Cal. Is't possible! will he be punished?
I. Ber. Yes.
Cal. With what? a mulct or an arrest?
I. Ber. With death!
Cal. Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counselled you, with your own hand.
I. Ber. Yes; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crushed, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital——But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone:
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a Tyrannicide.
Cal. You have more patience than I care to boast.
Had I been present when you bore this insult,
I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.
I. Ber. Thank Heaven you were not—all had else been marred:
As 'tis, our cause looks prosperous still.
Cal. You saw
The Doge—what answer gave he?
I. Ber. That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.
Cal. I told you so before, and that 'twas idle
To think of justice from such hands.
I. Ber. At least,
It lulled suspicion, showing confidence.
Had I been silent, not a Sbirro[1] but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.
Cal. But wherefore not address you to the Council?

tagliapietra, however eminent, to act on his own responsibility.—*La Congiura*, pp. 76, 77.]

1. [The *sbirri* were constables, officers of the police magistrates, the *signori di notte*. The Italians have a saying, *Dir le sue ragioni agli sbirri*, that is, to argue with a policeman.]

The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to *him?*
I. Ber. You shall know that hereafter.
Cal. Why not now?
I. Ber. Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
And bid our friends prepare their companies:
Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours: we have long waited
For a fit time—that hour is on the dial,
It may be, of to-morrow's sun: delay
Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And armed, excepting those of the Sixteen,[1]
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.
Cal. These brave words have breathed new life
Into my veins; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils: day on day
Crawled on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be Death or Freedom!
I'm weary to the heart of finding neither.
I. Ber. We will be free in Life or Death! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?
Cal. All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.
I. Ber. No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?
Cal. Bertram's [2] and old Soranzo's, both of whom

1. ["It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination."—See translation of Sanudo's *Narrative*, *post*, p. 464.]

2. [In the earlier chronicles Beltramo is named Vendrame. He was, according to some authorities, *compare* with Lioni, *i.e.* a co-sponsor of the same godchild. Signor Lazzarino (*La Congiura*, p. 90 (2))

Appear less forward in the cause than we are.
I. Ber. Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless cold; but there exists
Oft in concentred spirits not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.
Cal. I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;
And in a recent quarrel I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.
I. Ber. The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.
Cal. It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness;
Yet as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.
I. Ber. Such ties are not
For those who are called to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;
We must forget all feelings save the *one*,
We must resign all passions save our purpose,
We must behold no object save our country,
And only look on Death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to Heaven,
And draw down Freedom on her evermore.

maintains that in all probability Beltramo betrayed his companions from selfish motives, in order to save himself, and not from any "compunctious visitings," or because he was "too full o' the milk of human kindness." According to Sanudo (*vide post*, p. 465), "Beltramo Bergamasco" was not one of the principal conspirators, but "had heard a word or two of what was to take place." Ser Marco Soranzo (p. 466) was one of the "Zonta" of twenty who were elected as assessors to the Ten, to try the Doge of high treason against the Republic.]

Cal. But if we fail——[1]
I. Ber. They never fail who die[i.]
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore:
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their Spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which overpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to Freedom. What were we,
If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving[ii.]
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson—
A name which is a virtue, and a Soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile. He and his high friend were styled
"The last of Romans!"[2] Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.
Cal. Our fathers did not fly from Attila[3]
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeemed from the rude ocean's ooze,
To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silkworms[4] masters!

i. *In a great cause the block may soak their gore.—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *If Brutus had not lived? He failed in giving.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [Compare—

> "If we should fail,—— We fail.
> But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
> And we'll not fail."
>
> *Macbeth*, act i. sc. 7, lines 59–61.]

2. [At the battle of Philippi, B.C. 42, Brutus lamented over the body of Cassius, and called him the "last of the Romans."—Plutarch's *Lives*, "Marcus Brutus," Langhorne's translation, 1838, p. 686.]

3. [The citizens of Aquileia and Padua fled before the invasion of Attila, and retired to the Isle of Gradus, and Rivus Altus, or Rialto. Theodoric's minister, Cassiodorus, who describes the condition of the fugitives some seventy years after they had settled on the "hundred isles," compares them to "waterfowl who had fixed their nests on the bosom of the waves." (See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall, etc.*, 1825, ii. 375, *note* 6, and 376, *notes* 1, 2.)]

4. [*Mal bigatto*, "vile silkworm," is a term of contempt and reproach = "uomo de maligna intenzione," a knave.]

The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.
I. Ber. It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness;
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these orders
In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtained in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet.—Are all supplied with arms?
Cal. All who were deemed trust-worthy: there are some
Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them;
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.
I. Ber. You have said well. Have you remarked all such?
Cal. I've noted most; and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies.
As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 'tis
Commenced to-morrow; but, till 'tis begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.
I. Ber. Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.
Cal. We will not fail.
I. Ber. Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.
Cal. A stranger! doth he know the secret?
I. Ber. Yes.

Cal. And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?
I. Ber. I have risked no man's life except my own—
Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according[1]
His aid; and if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.
Cal. I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?
I. Ber. Aye, in spirit,
Although a child of Greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirred and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;
And add too, that his mind is liberal,
He sees and feels the people are oppressed,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
We have need of such, and such have need of us.
Cal. And what part would you have him take with us?
I. Ber. It may be, that of Chief.
Cal. What! and resign
Your own command as leader?
I. Ber. Even so.
My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had marked me out
To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found such

1. [Compare—

"I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate."

Macbeth, act iv. sc. 1, lines 83, 84.]

As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
That I would hesitate from selfishness,
And, covetous of brief authority,
Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge.
Away! and let us meet at the fixed hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.
Cal. Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other Chief;
What the rest will decide, I know not, but
I am with YOU, as I have ever been,
In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it.—A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.*

Enter the DOGE *alone, disguised.*

Doge (*solus*). I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befall them. Yes, proud city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;

And therefore was I punished, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Mouldered into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,
When what is now a handful shook the earth—
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest[1]—my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task—
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonoured all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords:[i.]
And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perished in the field, where I since conquered,
Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offered up
By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?[ii.]
Spirits! smile down upon me! for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,

i. *We thought to make our peers and not our masters.*—
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. —— *merit such requital.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [For Byron's correction of this statement, *vide ante*, p. 366. The monument of the Doge Vitale Falier (d. 1096) "was at the right side of the principal entrance into the Vestibule." According to G. Meschinello (*La Chiesa Ducale*, 1753), Ordelafo Falier was buried in the *Atrio* of St. Mark's. See, too, *Venetia città nobilissima . . . descritta da F. Sansovino*, 1663, pp. 96, 556.]

And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our House's name
Worthier of what you were—now and hereafter!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I. Ber. Who goes there?
Doge. A friend to Venice.
I. Ber. 'Tis he.
Welcome, my Lord,—you are before the time.
Doge. I am ready to proceed to your assembly.
I. Ber. Have with you.—I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispelled?
Doge. Not so—but I have set my little left[1]
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listened to your treason.—Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your Sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragged to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.
I. Ber. Strange words, my Lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.
Doge. *We—We!*—no matter—you have earned the right
To talk of *us*.—But to the point.—If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, rendered free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs,
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,

1. [Compare—

"I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die."

Richard III., act v. sc. 4, lines 9, 10.]

And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel;—thou
No less than he who was thy Sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.
I. Ber. 'Tis not the moment to consider thus,
Else I could answer.—Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.
Doge. We *are* observed, and have been.
I. Ber. We observed!
Let me discover—and this steel——
Doge. Put up;
Here are no human witnesses: look there—
What see you?
I. Ber. Only a tall warrior's statue[1]
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.
Doge. That Warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city:—
Think you that he looks down on us or no?
I. Ber. My Lord, these are mere fantasies; there are
No eyes in marble.
Doge. But there are in Death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'Tis in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant Chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians?

1. ["The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before the church, is not . . . of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date."—*Vide ante*, Preface, p. 336. "In the Campo in front of the church [facing the Rio dei Mendicanti] stands the equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni, the second equestrian statue raised in Italy after the revival of the arts. . . . The handsome marble pedestal is lofty, supported and flanked by composite columns."—*Handbook: Northern Italy*, p. 374.]

I. Ber. It had been as well
To have pondered this before,—ere you embarked
In our great enterprise.—Do you repent?
Doge. No—but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,[i.]
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause:
Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,
Which is your best security. There's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot[ii.]
So wronged as I, so fall'n, so loudly called
To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.
I. Ber. Let us away—hark—the Hour strikes.
Doge. On—on—
It is our knell, or that of Venice.—On.
I. Ber. Say rather, 'tis her Freedom's rising peal
Of Triumph. This way—we are near the place.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The House where the Conspirators meet.*

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, ETC., ETC.

Cal. (*entering*). Are all here?
Dag. All with you; except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momently.
Cal. Where's Bertram?
Ber. Here!
Cal. Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?
Ber. I had marked out some: but I have not dared

i. *Nor dwindle to a cut-throat without shuddering.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]
ii. *A scourged mechanic* ——.—[*MS. M.*]
A roused mechanic ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.
Cal. There is no need
Of trusting to their faith; *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent? they think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory,[1]
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well fleshed
In the rank hearts of the more odious Senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs, and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perished.
Ber. How say you? *all!*
Cal. Whom wouldst thou spare?
Ber. *I spare?*
I have no power to spare. I only questioned,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men
There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.
Cal. Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun,
In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
Of pitying some particular fang which made
One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain; one mass, one breath, one body;
They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
Revel, and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!*[1]
Dag. Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole; it is not

1. *So let them die* { *in* / *as* } *one.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. An historical fact. [See Appendix, Note A, p. 464.]

Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this Aristocracy
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'Twould fasten in the soil, and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!
Cal. Look to it well
Bertram! I have an eye upon thee.
Ber. Who
Distrusts me?
Cal. Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust:
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.
Ber. You should know
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;
A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me
Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I'll clear them on your person!
Cal. You are welcome,
When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
Be interrupted by a private brawl.
Ber. I am no brawler; but can bear myself
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learned to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight
Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of man surprised a glory. Well—too well
I know that we must do such things on those
Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain

Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!
Dag. Calm thee, Bertram,
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and the* DOGE, *disguised.*

Dag. Welcome, Israel.
Consp. Most welcome.—Brave Bertuccio, thou art late—
Who is this stranger?
Cal. It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.
I. Ber. Stranger, step forth!
[*The Doge discovers himself.*
Consp. To arms!—we are betrayed—it is the Doge!
Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and
The tyrant he hath sold us to.
Cal. (*drawing his sword*). Hold! hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear
Bertuccio—What! are you appalled to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
Amongst you?—Israel, speak! what means this mystery?
I. Ber. Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.
Doge. Strike!—If I dreaded death, a death more fearful
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here: Oh, noble Courage!
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave

Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
At sight of one patrician! Butcher me!
You can, I care not.—Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon them!
Cal. Faith! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.
Was this your trust in your true Chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.
I. Ber. I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like mine
Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that who e'er was brought
By me into this Council had been led
To take his choice—as brother, or as victim.
Doge. And which am I to be? your actions leave
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.
I. Ber. My Lord, we would have perished here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,
And droop their heads; believe me, they are such
As I described them.—Speak to them.
Cal. Aye, speak;
We are all listening in wonder.[i.]
I. Ber. (*addressing the conspirators*). You are safe,
Nay, more, almost triumphant—listen then,
And know my words for truth.
Doge. You see me here,
As one of you hath said, an old, unarmed,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me
Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent Sovereign of our hundred isles,[ii. 1]

i. *We are all lost in wonder.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. —— *of our splendid City.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [Compare—
"Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza i. line 9, and *var.* i.]

Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters—the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wronged,
He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgement to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital—it is here,
Here at my heart the outrage—but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices,
In this—I cannot call it commonwealth,
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state[i.]
Without its virtues—temperance and valour.
The Lords of Lacedæmon were true soldiers,[ii.]
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved;
Although dressed out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this Monster of a state,
This mockery of a Government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood,—and then
We will renew the times of Truth and Justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportioned like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,

i. *But all the worst sins of the Spartan state.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *The Lords of old Laconia* ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you—if you trust in me;
If not, strike home,—my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants: such I am not,
And never have been—read it in our annals;
I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the Senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets,[1] dizened out
To sit in state as for a Sovereign's picture;
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"
A sceptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of "the Ten," [2] a council-fawner,
A tool—a fool—a puppet,—they had ne'er
Fostered the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
Has reached me through my pity for the people;
That many know, and they who know not yet
Will one day learn: meantime I do devote,
Whate'er the issue, my last days of life—

1. [Compare—

"A king of shreds and patches."
Hamlet, act iii. sc. 4, line 102.]

2. ["The members of the Ten (*Il Consiglio de' Dieci*) were elected in the Great Council for one year only, and were not re-eligible for the year after they had held office. Every month the Ten elected three of their own number as chiefs, or *Capi* of the Council. . . . The court consisted, besides the Ten, of the Doge and his six councillors, seventeen members in all, of whom twelve were necessary to make a *quorum*. One of the *Avogadori di Comun*, or State advocates, was always present, without the power to vote, but to act as clerk to the court, informing it of the law, and correcting it where its procedure seemed informal. Subsequently it became customary to add twenty members to the Council, elected in the Maggior Consiglio, for each important case as it arose."—*Venice, an Historical Sketch*, by Horatio F. Brown, 1893, pp. 177, 178. (See, too, *Les Archives de Venise*, par Armand Baschet, 1870, p. 525.)]

My present power such as it is, not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame)—my breath—
(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)
My heart—my hope—my soul—upon this cast!
Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs; accept me or reject me,—
A Prince who fain would be a Citizen
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

Cal. Long live Faliero!—Venice shall be free!

Consp. Long live Faliero!

I. Ber. Comrades! did I well?
Is not this man a host in such a cause?

Doge. This is no time for eulogies, nor place
For exultation. Am I one of you?

Cal. Aye, and the first among us, as thou hast been
Of Venice—be our General and Chief.

Doge. Chief!—General!—I was General at Zara,
And Chief in Rhodes and Cyprus,[1] Prince in Venice:
I cannot stoop —— that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of —— patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'Tis not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows—but now to the point:
Israel has stated to me your whole plan—
'Tis bold, but feasible if I assist it,
And must be set in motion instantly.

Cal. E'en when thou wilt. Is it not so, my friends?
I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
When shall it be then?

Doge. At sunrise.

Ber. So soon?

Doge. So soon?—so late—each hour accumulates
Peril on peril, and the more so now
Since I have mingled with you;—know you not

1. [The chronicles are silent as to any embassy or commission from the Republic to Rhodes or Cyprus in which Marin Falier held office or took any part whatever. Cyprus did not pass into the hands of Venice till 1489, and Rhodes was held by the Knights of St. John till 1522.]

The Council, and "the Ten?" the spies, the eyes
Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the Prince they have made one?
I tell you, you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the Hydra's heart—its heads will follow.
Cal. With all my soul and sword, I yield assent;
Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my Lord, the signal?
Doge. When you hear
The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be
Struck without special order of the Doge
(The last poor privilege they leave their Prince),
March on Saint Mark's!
I. Ber. And there?—
Doge. By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of War
And of the Genoese Fleet, by the first dawn
Discerned before the port; form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark!—the foe is on our waters!"
Cal. I see it now—but on, my noble Lord.
Doge. All the patricians flocking to the Council,
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
Pealing from out their Patron Saint's proud tower,)
Will then be gathered in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
If some few should be tardy or absent, them,
'Twill be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.
Cal. Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,[1]

1. [Compare—
"We have scotched the snake, not killed it."
Macbeth, act iii. sc. 11, line 13.

But kill.

Ber. Once more, sir, with your pardon, I
Would now repeat the question which I asked
Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims—must all perish in this slaughter?

Cal. All who encounter me and mine—be sure,
The mercy they have shown, I show.

Consp. All! all!
Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feigned it?

I. Ber. Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
From out the guilty? all their acts are one—
A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'Tis
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? however,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel:
Let him decide if any should be saved.

Doge. Ask me not—tempt me not with such a question—
Decide yourselves.

I. Ber. You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
One who deserves to be repealed, pronounce.

Doge. Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando
Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared[1. 1]

1. *Fought by my side, and John Grimani shared.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [Marc Cornaro did not "share" his Genoese, but his Hungarian

My Genoese embassy: I saved the life[i]
Of Veniero—shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!
Cal. They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!
Doge. Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant[ii]
What fatal poison to the springs of Life,
To human ties, and all that's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice:
All these men were my friends; I loved them, they
Requited honourably my regards;
We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;
We revelled or we sorrowed side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly,—till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their Prince, and then farewell!
Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
When the survivors of long years and actions,
Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them whispering of the days gone by,
And seeming not all dead, as long as two
Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain

i. *My mission to the Pope; I saved the life.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]
ii. *Bear witness with me! ye who hear and know,*
And feel our mutual mass of many wrongs.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

embassy.—*M. Faliero Avanti il Dogado: Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1893, vol. v. pt. i. p. 144.]

A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble——
Oimé! Oimé! [1]—and must I do this deed?
I. Ber. My Lord, you are much moved: it is not now
That such things must be dwelt upon.
Doge. Your patience
A moment—I recede not: mark with me
The gloomy vices of this government.
From the hour they made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY *made* me—
Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life—all were cut off:
They came not near me—such approach gave umbrage;
They could not love me—such was not the law;
They thwarted me—'twas the state's policy;
They baffled me—'twas a patrician's duty;
They wronged me, for such was to right the state;
They could not right me—that would give suspicion,
So that I was a slave to my own subjects;
So that I was a foe to my own friends;
Begirt with spies for guards, with robes for power,
With pomp for freedom, gaolers for a council,
Inquisitors for friends, and Hell for life!
I had only one fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poisoned! My pure household gods [2]
Were shivered on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
Sate grinning Ribaldry, and sneering Scorn.[i]
I. Ber. You have been deeply wronged, and now shall be

i. *Sate grinning Mockery* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [The Italian Oimé recalls the Latin *Hei mihi* and the Greek Οἴμοι.]

2. [Compare—

"Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hope sapped, name blighted, Life's life lied away?"
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza cxxxv. lines 5, 6.

And—

"The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him."
The Dream, sect. viii. lines 3, 4, *vide ante*, p. 40.]

Nobly avenged before another night.
Doge. I had borne all—it hurt me, but I bore it—
Till this last running over of the cup
Of bitterness—until this last loud insult,
Not only unredressed, but sanctioned; then,
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me—
The feelings which they crushed for me, long, long[i]
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
Their friend and made a Sovereign, as boys make
Playthings, to do their pleasure—and be broken![ii]
I from that hour have seen but Senators
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.
To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;
As Senators for arbitrary acts
Amenable, I look on them—as such
Let them be dealt upon.
Cal. And now to action!
Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be
The last night of mere words: I'd fain be doing!
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful!
I. Ber. Disperse then to your posts: be firm and vigilant;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march. I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge: the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in Freedom and in Glory!
Cal. Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!
Doge. No; let him be reserved unto the last,

i. *The feelings they abused* ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]
ii. —— *and then perish.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,[1]
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul Aristocracy: he could not—
He dared not in more honourable days
Have risked it. I have merged all private wrath
Against him in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me—I require his punishment
From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

Cal. Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?

Doge. You would but lop the hand, and I the head;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master;
You would but punish Steno, I the Senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from Heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quenched two Cities' ashes.

I. Ber. Away, then, to your posts! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of tryst, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

Cal. Farewell, then,—until dawn!

I. Ber. Success go with you!

Consp. We will not fail—Away! My Lord, farewell!

[*The Conspirators salute the* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and retire, headed by* PHILIP CALENDARO. *The* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *remain.*

I. Ber. We have them in the toil—it cannot fail!
Now thou'rt indeed a Sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at Kings ere now;

1. *Nor turn aside to strike at such a* { *carrion.* / *wretch.* }—[*MS. M.*]

Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crushed dictators, as the popular steel
Has reached patricians: but, until this hour,
What Prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risked a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my Lord, to our enterprise;—'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

Doge. And is it then decided! must they die?

I. Ber. Who?

Doge. My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the Senators?

I. Ber. You passed their sentence, and it is a just one.

Doge. Aye, so it seems, and so it is to *you;*
You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus—[i.]
The rebel's oracle, the people's tribune—
I blame you not—you act in your vocation;[1]
They smote you, and oppressed you, and despised you;
So they have *me:* but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;
You never had their wine-cup at your lips:
You grew not up with them, nor laughed, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claimed their smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,
The elders of the Council: I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan;

i. *You are a patriot, plebeian Gracchus.*—[Ed. 1832.]
(*MS., and First Edition*, 1821, *insert* "*a.*")

1. [Compare "Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation, Hal; 'tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation."—1 *Henry IV.*, act i. sc. 2, lines 101, 102.]

And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.
I. Ber. Doge! Doge! this vacillation is unworthy
A child; if you are not in second childhood,
Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
Thus shame yourself and me. By Heavens! I'd rather
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink then
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drained from millions?
Doge. Bear with me! Step by step, and blow on blow,
I will divide with you; think not I waver:
Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way,
To which you only and the night are conscious,
And both regardless; when the Hour arrives,
'Tis mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strewed with their bleeding fruit,
And crush their blossoms into barrenness:
This will I—must I—have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been! Bear with me.
I. Ber. Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,
I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act, on your free will.
Doge. Aye, there it is—*you* feel not, nor do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives—and killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not—*you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles:
When all is over, you'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,

Shall see and feel—oh God! oh God! 'tis true,
And thou dost well to answer that it was
"My own free will and act," and yet you err,
For I *will* do this! Doubt not—fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings—both compel me back;
But there is *Hell* within me and around,
And like the Demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! away!
Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, St. Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
Except her slaughtered Senate: ere the Sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved—come on.

I. Ber. With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city: a true tyrant[1]
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
To punish a few traitors to the people.
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

Doge. Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*

1. *To this now shackled* ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Palazzo of the Patrician* LIONI.[1] LIONI *laying aside the mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

Lioni. I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet—I know not why—it cheered me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which, in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the Lady of my Love, oppressed me,
And through my spirit chilled my blood, until
A damp like Death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 'twould not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears [1]
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the City's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark:
So that I left the festival before
It reached its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.
Ant. Yes, my Lord:
Command you no refreshment?
Lioni. Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 'tis
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,

1. *High o'er the music* ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [Byron told Medwin that he wrote "Lioni's soliloquy one moonlight night, after coming from the Benzoni's."—*Conversations*, 1824, p. 177.]

And the broad Moon hath brightened. What a stillness!
[*Goes to an open lattice.*
And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which showed all things, but nothing as they were.
There Age essaying to recall the past,
After long striving for the hues of Youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Pranked forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fooled.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavished its true bloom, and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flushed and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.[1]

1. ["At present, I am on the invalid regimen myself. The Carnival —that is, the latter part of it, and sitting up late o' nights, had knocked me up a little. . . . The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, etc., etc.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find 'the sword wearing out the scabbard,' though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine.

"So we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

"For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.

"Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon."

Letter to Moore, February 28, 1817, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 59.]

The music, and the banquet, and the wine,
The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers,
The sparkling eyes, and flashing ornaments,
The white arms and the raven hair, the braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes,
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry[i.]
Of the fair forms which terminate so well—
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments—Art and Nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parched pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone. Around me are the stars and waters—
Worlds mirrored in the Ocean, goodlier sight[ii.]
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great Element, which is to space
What Ocean is to Earth, spreads its blue depths,
Softened with the first breathings of the spring;
The high Moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,[iii.]
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the Orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Reared up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.

i. *Suggesting dreams or unseen Symmetry.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]
ii. *Which give their glitter back, and the vast Æther.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]
iii. —— *seaborn palaces.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,[1]
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight; the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,[2]
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow checkering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,[i]
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding City—
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, Night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this.——
[*A knocking is heard from without.*
Hark! what is that? or who at such a moment?[ii]

i. —— *or towering spire.*—[*MS. M.*]
ii. —— *at this moment.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Compare "What, ma'amselle, don't you remember Ludovico, who rowed the Cavaliero's gondola at the last regatta, and won the prize? and who used to sing such sweet verses about Orlando's . . . all under my lattice . . . on the moonlight nights at Venice?"—*Mysteries of Udolpho*, by Anne Radcliffe, 1882, p. 195. Compare, too, *Beppo*, stanza xv. lines 1–6, *vide ante*, p. 164.]

2. [Compare "The gondolas gliding down the canals are like coffins or cradles . . . At night the darkness reveals the tiny lanterns which guide these boats, and they look like shadows passing by, lit by stars. Everything in this region is mystery—government, custom, love."—*Corinne or Italy*, by Madame de Staël, 1888, pp. 279, 280. Compare, too—

"In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless Gondolier."
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza iii. lines 1, 2,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 329 *note* 3.]

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. My Lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.
Lioni. Is he a stranger?[i]
Ant. His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;[ii]
I craved his name, but this he seemed reluctant
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.
Lioni. 'Tis a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 'tis not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 'twill be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—
Who can this man be?—
[*Exit* ANTONIO, *and returns with* BERTRAM *muffled.*
Ber. My good Lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou,—dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.
Lioni. It seems the voice of Bertram—Go, Antonio.
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?
Ber. (*discovering himself*). A boon, my noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.
Lioni. Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import—but say on—
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil?—

i. —— *Has he no name?*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *His voice and carriage* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.
Ber. My Lord, I thank you; but——
Lioni. But what?
You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?
If so—withdraw and fly—and own it not;[1]
I would not slay—but then I must not save thee!
He who has shed patrician blood——
Ber. I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life; since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass!—
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!
Lioni. Wherefore not?—
What means this menace?
Ber. Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee;—stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of crowds—
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes—
The groans of men—the clash of arms—the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarum!—Go not forth,
Until the Tocsin's silent, nor even then
Till I return!
Lioni. Again, what does this mean?
Ber. Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or Heaven—by all
The Souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee—
By all thou hast of blessed in hope or memory—

1. *If so withdraw and fly and tell me not.*—
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter—
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,[i]
Remain within—trust to thy household gods,[ii]
And to my word for safety, if thou dost,
As I now counsel—but if not, thou art lost!
Lioni. I am indeed already lost in wonder;
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*
Art *thou* leagued with them?—*thou!* or, if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?
Ber. I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning?
Lioni. I was not born to shrink from idle threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.
Ber. Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?
Lioni. I am. Nor is there aught which shall impede me!
Ber. Then, Heaven have mercy on thy soul!—Farewell! [*Going.*
Lioni. Stay—there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:
Bertram, I have known thee long.
Ber. From childhood, Signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy, when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we played together;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother; years
Saw us together—happy, heart-full hours!
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours and this!
Lioni. Bertram, 'tis thou who hast forgotten them.

i. *Good I would now requite* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *Remain at home* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Ber. Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you: when to Manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not; and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 'twas no fault of him
Who ofttimes rescued and supported me,
When struggling with the tides of Circumstance,
Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow Senators were like thee!

Lioni. Why, what hast thou to say against the Senate?[i]

Ber. Nothing.

Lioni. I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns;
Thou herdest not with such: 'tis true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and Shame and Conscience seem at war
To waste thee.

Ber. Rather Shame and Sorrow light
On the accurséd tyranny which rides[ii]
The very air in Venice, and makes men
Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!

Lioni. Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;

i. *Why what hast thou to gainsay of the Senate?—* [*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

ii. *On the accursed tyranny which taints.—* [*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection:
But thou must not be lost so; thou *wert* good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As Vice and Villany would put thee to:
Confess—confide in me—thou know'st my nature.
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
Which should prevent thy friend, the only son
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,
So that our good-will is a heritage
We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deem thee dangerous, and keep the house
Like a sick girl?

Ber. Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone.——

Lioni. And I be murdered!—say,
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?

Ber. Who talks of murder? what said I of murder?
'Tis false! I did not utter such a word.

Lioni. Thou didst not; but from out thy wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life's thine object,
Take it—I am unarmed,—and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure[1]
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

Ber. Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

Lioni. Aye, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs—who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?

Ber. Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

Lioni. More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,

1. *I would not draw my breath* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious: for 'tis more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too—
Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee!
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people?
And such may be my doom; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

Ber. Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost!—*thou!* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor!
Let me save thee—but spare my honour!

Lioni. Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the State?

Ber. A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard[1]
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

Lioni. And *who* will strike the steel to mine?

Ber. Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the Life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be
The assassin thou miscall'st me:—once, once more
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold!

Lioni. It is in vain—this moment I go forth.

Ber. Then perish Venice rather than my friend!
I will disclose—ensnare—betray—destroy—

1. [If Gifford had been at the pains to *read* Byron's manuscripts, or revise the proofs, he would surely have pointed out, if he had not ventured to amend, his bad grammar.]

Oh, what a villain I become for thee!

Lioni. Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the State's!—
Speak—pause not—all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such as
The State accords her worthiest servants; nay,
Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

Ber. I have thought again: it must not be—I love thee—
Thou knowest it—that I stand here is the proof,
Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell—we meet no more in life!—farewell!

Lioni. What, ho!—Antonio—Pedro—to the door!
See that none pass—arrest this man!——

Enter ANTONIO *and other armed Domestics, who seize* BERTRAM.

Lioni (*continues*). Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and cloak,
And man the gondola with four oars—quick—
[*Exit* ANTONIO.
We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's,
And send for Marc Cornaro:—fear not, Bertram;
This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

Ber. Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

Lioni. Firstly to "the Ten;"
Next to the Doge.

Ber. To the Doge?

Lioni. Assuredly:
Is he not Chief of the State?

Ber. Perhaps at sunrise—

Lioni. What mean you?—but we'll know anon.

Ber. Art sure?

Lioni. Sure as all gentle means can make; and if
They fail, you know "the Ten" and their tribunal,
And that St. Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.

Ber. Apply it then before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven.—One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
You think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

Ant. The bark is ready,
My Lord, and all prepared.
Lioni. Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Ducal Palace—The Doge's Apartment.*

The DOGE *and his Nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge. Are all the people of our house in muster?
Ber. F. They are arrayed, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo:[1]
I come for your last orders.
Doge. It had been
As well had there been time to have got together,
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers—but it is too late.
Ber. F. Methinks, my Lord, 'tis better as it is:
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintained
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.
Doge. True; but when once the signal has been given
These are the men for such an enterprise;
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants,
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;

1. The Doge's family palace.

Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;[1]
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic Senate;
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.
Ber. F. We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the Senate I will answer.
Doge. Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants:
They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cowered to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These Citizens all Lions, like their Standard;[1]
But if there's much to do, you'll wish, with me,
A band of iron rustics at our backs.
Ber. F. Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolve
To strike the blow so suddenly.
Doge. Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermastered the weak false remorse
Which yearned about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the Senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,

1. *A Loredano* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xiv. line 3, *Poetical Works*, 1898, ii. 339, *note* 1.]

Though Circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced, but *till*
That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
Are capable of turning them aside.—
How goes the night?

Ber. F. Almost upon the dawn.

Doge. Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

Ber. F. By this time they are;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

Doge. 'Tis well.—Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this Commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,
And trembled at the thought of this dread duty;
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an Admiral Galley:[1]
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath been
A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish—Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more
To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal,[2] than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

Ber. F. It gladdens me to see your former wisdom

1. [Compare "Themistocles was sacrificing on the deck of the admiral-galley."—*Plutarch's Lives*, Langhorne, 1838, p. 89.]

2. [For Timoleon, who first saved, and afterwards slew his brother Timophanes, for aiming at sovereignty, see *The Siege of Corinth*, line 59, *note* 1, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 452.]

Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.
Doge. It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger; though
The laws sleep, Justice wakes, and injured souls
Oft do a public right with private wrong,
And justify their deeds unto themselves.—
Methinks the day breaks—is it not so? look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth;—the air puts on
A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
The sea looks greyer through the lattice.
Ber. F. True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.[i.] [1]
Doge. Away then!
See that they strike without delay, and with
The first toll from St. Mark's, march on the palace
With all our House's strength; here I will meet you;
The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same moment:
Be sure you post yourself at the great Gate:
I would not trust "the Ten" except to us—
The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
Remember that the cry is still "Saint Mark!
The Genoese are come—ho! to the rescue!
Saint Mark and Liberty!"—Now—now to action![ii.]

i. *The night is clearing from the sky.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]
ii. —— *Now—now to business.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [For the use of "dapple" as an intransitive verb, compare *Mazeppa*, xvi. line 646, *vide ante*, p. 227.]

Ber. F. Farewell then, noble Uncle! we will meet
In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!
Doge. Come hither, my Bertuccio—one embrace;
Speed, for the day grows broader; send me soon
A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then sound—sound
The storm-bell from St. Mark's![i]

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Doge (*solus*). He is gone,
And on each footstep moves a life. 'Tis done.[1]
Now the destroying Angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment, poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak.[2] Thou Day!
That slowly walk'st the waters! march—march on—
I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea waves!
I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flowed too, but victorious:
Now thou must wear an unmixed crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years[3] for this?
I, who was named Preserver of the City?
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung[ii]
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,

i. *The signal* ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]
The storm-clock ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. —— *ten thousand caps were flung*
Into the air and thrice ten ——.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. ["'Tis done . . . unerring beak" (six lines), not in MS.]
2. [Byron had forgotten the dictum of the artist Reinagle, that "eagles and all birds of prey attack with their talons and not with their beaks" (see *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xviii. line 6, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 226, *note* 1); or, possibly, had discovered that eagles attack with their beaks as well as their talons.]
3. [*Vide ante*, p. 368, *note* 1.]

And fame, and length of days—to see this day?
But this day, black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires, and refuse their crown;[1]
I will resign a crown, and make the State
Renew its freedom—but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them. What
Are a few drops of human blood? 'tis false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,
Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 'tis time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous.—Oh World!
Oh Men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword superfluous?
And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me?—
I must not ponder this. [*A pause.*
Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!
It cannot be—the signal hath not rung—
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,[i.]
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfullest and last

i. *Where swings the sullen* { *iron oracle.* / *huge oracular bell.* }—
[*Alternative reading.* *MS. M.*]

1. [Compare—
"Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!"
Childe Harold, Canto IV. stanza xii. line 8,
Poetical Works, 1899, ii. 337.]

Sound till the strong tower rock!—What! silent still?
I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of re-union to
The oft discordant elements which form
Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
The wavering of the weak, in case of conflict;
For if they should do battle, 'twill be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken:
Then here must be my station, as becomes
The master-mover.——Hark! he comes—he comes,
My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger.—
What tidings? Is he marching? hath he sped?
They here!—all's lost—yet will I make an effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT,[1] *with Guards, etc., etc.*

Sig. Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

Doge. Me!
Thy Prince, of treason?—Who are they that dare
Cloak their own treason under such an order?

Sig. (*showing his order*). Behold my order from the assembled Ten.

Doge. And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no
Such Council can be lawful, till the Prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine:[2] on thine
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the Council chamber.

Sig. Duke! it may not be:
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

Doge. You dare to disobey me, then?

Sig. I serve

1. "I Signori di Notte" held an important charge in the old republic. [The surveillance of the "sestieri" was assigned to the "Collegio dei Signori di notte al criminal." Six in all, they were at once police magistrates and superintendents of police. (See Cappelletti, *Storia, etc.*, 1856, ii. 293.)]

2. [The Doge overstates his authority. He could not preside without his Council "in the *Maggior Consiglio*, or in the Senate, or in the College; but four ducal councillors had the power to preside without the Doge. The Doge might not open despatches except in the presence of his Council, but his Council might open despatches in the absence of the Doge."—*Venetian Studies*, by H. F. Brown, 1887, p. 189.]

The State, and needs must serve it faithfully;
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.
Doge. And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and, as *now* applied,
Rebellious. Hast thou weighed well thy life's worth,
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?[i.]
Sig. 'Tis not my office to reply, but act—
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.
Doge (*aside*). I must gain time. So that the storm-bell sound,[ii.] [1]
All may be well yet. Kinsman, speed—speed—speed!—
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquished! be they Prince and people,
Or slaves and Senate—
[*The great bell of St. Mark's tolls.*
Lo! it sounds—it tolls!
Doge (*aloud*). Hark, Signor of the Night! and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell.—Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?
Sig. Confusion!
Stand to your arms, and guard the door—all's lost
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath missed his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.[iii.]
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.
[*Exit part of the Guard.*
Doge. Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore it;

i. *That thus you dare assume a brigand's power.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. —— *storm-clock.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
iii. *Or met some unforeseen and fatal obstacle.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Byron may have had in his mind the "bell or clocke" (see *var.* ii.) in Southey's ballad of *The Inchcape Rock.*

"On a buoy in the storm it floated and swung,
And over the waves its warning rung."]

It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Aye, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.
Sig. So let it be!
They die then in their duty, as will I.
Doge. Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons,—live on,
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.
Sig. And learn thou to be captive. It hath ceased,
[*The bell ceases to toll.*
The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey—
The knell hath rung, but it is not the Senate's!
Doge (*after a pause*). All's silent, and all's lost!
Sig. Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted Council!
Have I not done my duty?
Doge. Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earned the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now—then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy Prince.
Sig. I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.
Doge (*aside*). There now is nothing left me save to die;
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus!——

Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT, *with* BERTUCCIO FALIERO *prisoner.*

2nd Sig. We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.
1st Sig. Are all the passes

Which lead up to the palace well secured?
2nd Sig. They are—besides, it matters not; the Chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial—
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.
Ber. F. Uncle!
Doge. It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.
Ber. F. Who would have deemed it?—Ah! one moment sooner!
Doge. That moment would have changed the face of ages;
This gives us to Eternity—We'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 'tis
But a brief passage—I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 'tis like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.
Ber. F. I shall not shame you, Uncle.
1st Sig. Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the Council call ye to your trial.
Doge. Our trial! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us,
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'Tis but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice.—Who hath been our Judas?
1st Sig. I am not warranted to answer that.
Ber. F. I'll answer for thee—'tis a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret Giunta.
Doge. Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools[1]
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stamped in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled

1. [A translation of *Beltramo Bergamasco, i.e.* a native of the town and province of Bergamo, in the north of Italy. Compare "Comasco." Harlequin . . . was a Bergamasc, and the personification of the manners, accent, and jargon of the inhabitants of the Val Brembana.—*Handbook: Northern Italy*, p. 240.]

Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurled down the Gauls, was cast[i.]
From the Tarpeian.

1st Sig. He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the State.

Doge. He saved the State,
And sought but to reform what he revived—
But this is idle——Come, sirs, do your work.

1st Sig. Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.

Ber. F. Farewell, Uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

Doge. Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogged, hath failed in!
They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurled them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who, on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of* MARINO FALIERO, *composed what was called the Giunta,—Guards, Officers, etc., etc.* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO *as Prisoners.* BERTRAM, LIONI, *and Witnesses, etc.*

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.[ii. 1]

Ben. There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,

i. *While Manlius, who hurled back the Gauls* ——.—
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

ii. *The Grand Chancellor of the Ten.*—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. ["In the notes to *Marino Faliero*, it may be as well to say that '*Benintende*' was not really of *the ten*, but merely *Grand Chancellor*—a separate office, though an important one: it was an arbitrary alteration of mine."—Letter to Murray, October 12, 1820.

Byron's correction was based on a chronicle cited by Sanudo, which

But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the Law:—a grievous task
To those who hear, and those who speak. Alas!
That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank;
A City which has opened India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the Ocean's Queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'Tis to sap
The throne of such a City, these lost men
Have risked and forfeited their worthless lives—
So let them die the death.

I. Ber. We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

Ben. If ye have that to say which would obtain
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time,—perhaps it may avail ye.

I. Ber. We stand to hear, and not to speak.

Ben. Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which Circumstance can add to aid them;
Yet we would hear from your own lips complete
Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
Alone can profit you on earth or Heaven—
Say, then, what was your motive?

I. Ber. Justice![1]

1. *Venice.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

is responsible for the statement that Beneintendi de Ravignani presided as Grand Chancellor at the Doge's trial, and took down his examination. As a matter of fact, Beneintendi was at Milan, not at Venice, when the trial took place. The "college" which conducted the examination of the Doge consisted of Giovanni Mocenigo, Councillor; Giovanni Marcello, Chief of the Ten; Luga da Lezze, "Inquisitore;" and Orio Pasqualigo, "Avogadore."—*La Congiura*, p. 104 (2).]

Ben. What
Your object?
I. Ber. Freedom!
Ben. You are brief, sir.
I. Ber. So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.
Ben. Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
To brave your judges to postpone the sentence?
I. Ber. Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.
Ben. Is this your sole reply to the Tribunal?
I. Ber. Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrenched limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there—
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already—
Ye lose the public spectacle, with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation Truth, if Nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite—must we bear or die?
Ben. Say, who were your accomplices?
I. Ber. The Senate.
Ben. What do you mean?
I. Ber. Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.
Ben. You know the Doge?
I. Ber. I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way
To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the Senate's insults.
Ben. You have held conference with him?
I. Ber. I am weary—
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

Ben. It is coming.
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what
Have you to say why you should not be doomed?
Cal. I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utterance.
Ben. A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.
Cal. Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did—
Ben. What then?
Cal. Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?
Ben. Assuredly.
Cal. Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?
Ben. Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.
Cal. And on this testimony would he perish?
Ben. So your confession be detailed and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.
Cal. Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the Eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shalt be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretched there for the second time.
One of the Giunta. Lord President, 'twere best proceed to judgment;
There is no more to be drawn from these men.[1]
Ben. Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime—our law—and peril
The State now stands in, leave not an hour's respite.
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday,[1]
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people!

1. *There is no more to be wrung from these men.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. "Giovedi grasso,"—"fat or greasy Thursday,"—which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

And Heaven have mercy on their souls!
The Giunta. Amen!
I. Ber. Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.
Ben. And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude—
Guards! let their mouths be gagged[1] even in the act
Of execution. Lead them hence!
Cal. What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?
Ben. A priest is waiting in the antechamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.
Cal. I knew that we were gagged in life; at least
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deemed
That in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since——
I. Ber. Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro!
What matter a few syllables? let's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To Heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices—nay, they dread
Our very silence—let them live in fear!
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above!—Lead on; we are ready.
Cal. Israel, hadst thou but hearkened unto me
It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would——
I. Ber. Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?
Bert. Alas! I fain you died in peace with me:
I did not seek this task; 'twas forced upon me:
Say, you forgive me, though I never can

1. Historical fact. See Sanuto, Appendix, Note A [*vide post*, p. 466].

Retrieve my own forgiveness—frown not thus!
I. Ber. I die and pardon thee!
Cal. (*spitting at him*).[1] I die and scorn thee!
[*Exeunt* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO, *Guards, etc.*
Ben. Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'Tis time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!
The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall
He now be called in to receive the award?
The Giunta. Aye, aye.
Ben. Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the Council.
One of the Giunta. And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?
Ben. When all the Chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the Senate.

1. ["I know what Foscolo means about Calendaro's *spitting* at Bertram: *that's* national—the *objection*, I mean. The Italians and French, with those 'flags of Abomination,' their pocket handkerchiefs, spit there, and here, and every where else—in your face almost, and therefore *object* to it on the Stage as *too familiar*. But we who *spit* nowhere—but in a man's face when we grow savage—are not likely to feel this. Remember *Massinger*, and Kean's Sir Giles Overreach—

'Lord! *thus* I *spit* at thee and thy Counsel!'"

—Letter to Murray, October 8, 1820, *Letters*, v. 1901, 89.
"Sir Giles Overreach" says to "Lord Lovel," in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, act v. sc. 1, "Lord! thus I spit at thee, and at thy counsel." Compare, too—

"You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine."
Merchant of Venice, act i. sc. 3, lines 106, 107.]

Enter the DOGE *as Prisoner, with Guards, etc., etc.*

Ben. Doge—for such still you are, and by the law
Must be considered, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the Ducal Bonnet from
That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than Empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A City's glory—we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appeared against you; and more ample
Ne'er reared their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

Doge. What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and Executioners!—Proceed
Upon your power.

Ben. Your chief accomplices
Having confessed, there is no hope for you.

Doge. And who be they?

Ben. In number many; but
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram of Bergamo,—would you question him?

Doge (*looking at him contemptuously*). No.

Ben. And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!

Doge. And where are they?

Ben. Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

Doge. Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?

Ben. Think of your own:
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?[1]

Doge. I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor

1. *It is impending* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Can recognise your legal power to try me.
Show me the law!
Ben. On great emergencies,
The law must be remodelled or amended:
Our fathers had not fixed the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms; who would have foreseen
That Nature could be filed to such a crime[1]
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What's nobler than the signory[2] of Venice?
Doge. The signory of Venice! You betrayed me—
You—you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands—on flood, in field, in cities—
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crowned, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not,
I sought not, wished not, dreamed not the election,
Which reached me first at Rome, and I obeyed;
But found on my arrival, that, besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your Sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum[3] of

1. ["Is [Solon] cum interrogaretur, cur nullum supplicium constituisset in eum qui parentem necasset, respondit se id neminem facturum putasse."—Cicero, *Pro Sext. Roscio Amerino*, cap. 25.]

2. ["Signory" is used loosely to denote the State or Government of Venice, not the "*collegio*" or "*Signoria Serenissima.*"]

3. [This statement is strictly historical. On the death of Andrea Dandolo (September 7, 1354) the *Maggior Consiglio* appointed a commission of five "savi" to correct and modify the "promissione," or

My journey to the capital, curtailed
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the Duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stained
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you—
Fit judge in such tribunal!——
Ben. (*interrupting him*). Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; "the Ten" having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the Senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!
Doge. His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'Twas purity compared with your protection.
Ben. And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All Feeling, Wisdom, Faith and Fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?
Doge. A spark creates the flame—'tis the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppressed the Prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have failed in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse

ducal oath. The alterations which the commissioners suggested were designed to prevent the Doge from acting on his own initiative in matters of foreign policy.—*La Congiura*, pp. 30, 31.]

When they were freed, and flourished ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:[1]
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death—the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,
And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs:
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.[2]

Ben. You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our Tribunal?

Doge. I confess to have failed;
Fortune is female: from my youth her favours
Were not withheld, the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

Ben. You do not then in aught arraign our equity?

Doge. Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resigned to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies—a host already;
'Tis true, these sullen walls should yield no echo:
But walls have ears—nay, more, they have tongues; and if
There were no other way for Truth to o'erleap them,[i.]
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of Good or Evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:

i. *There were no other ways for truth to pierce them.—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Gelo is quoted as the type of a successful and beneficent tyrant held in honour by all posterity; Thrasybulus as a consistent advocate and successful champion of democracy.]

2. [The lines from "I would have stood . . . while living" are not in the MS.]

Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye make me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this;
I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the Court!

Ben. This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.[i.]

Doge. The torture! you have put me there already,
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

Officer. Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero[ii.]
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

Ben. Say, Conscript Fathers,[1] shall she be admitted?

One of the Giunta. She may have revelations of importance
Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.

Ben. Is this the general will?

All. It is.

Doge. Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope

i. *The torture for the exposure of the truth.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

ii. *Noble Venetians!* { *Doge Faliero's consort.* / *with respect the Duchess.* }—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of "conscript fathers." [It was not, however, the Senate, the *Pregadi*, but the *Consiglio dei Dieci*, supplemented by the *Zonta* of Twenty, which tried and condemned the Doge.]

That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all Honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS *enters.*

Ben. Lady! this just Tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale—ho! there, look to the Lady!
Place a chair instantly.
Ang. A moment's faintness—
'Tis past; I pray you pardon me,—I sit not
In presence of my Prince and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.
Ben. Your pleasure, Lady?
Ang. Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reached me, and I come
To know the worst, even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it——I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!
Ben. (*after a pause*). Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition
Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to Heaven and man!
Ang. Yet speak; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemned?
Ben. Alas!
Ang. And was he guilty?
Ben. Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question

Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.
Ang. Is it so?
My Lord, my Sovereign, my poor father's friend,
The mighty in the field, the sage in Council,
Unsay the words of this man!—thou art silent!
Ben. He hath already owned to his own guilt,[i.]
Nor, as thou see'st, doth he deny it now.
Ang. Aye, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which Grief and Shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crownéd with brave acts.
Ben. His doom must be fulfilled without remission
Of time or penalty—'tis a decree.
Ang. He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.
Ben. Not in this case with justice.
Ang. Alas! Signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live were all judged justly?
Ben. His punishment is safety to the State.
Ang. He was a subject, and hath served the State;
He was your General, and hath saved the State;
He is your Sovereign, and hath ruled the State.[ii.]
One of the Council. He is a traitor, and betrayed the State.
Ang. And, but for him, there now had been no State
To save or to destroy; and you, who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!
One of the Council. No, Lady, there are others who would die
Rather than breathe in slavery!
Ang. If there are so

i. *He hath already granted his own guilt.—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *He is a Sovereign and hath swayed the state.—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:
The truly brave are generous to the fallen!—
Is there no hope?
Ben. Lady, it cannot be.
Ang. (*turning to the Doge*). Then die, Faliero! since
it must be so;
But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half cancelled by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them, have prayed to them,
Have begged as famished mendicants for bread,
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answered as they answer,—
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a Prince, address thee to thy doom!
Doge. I have lived too long not to know how to die!
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies
I sought to free the groaning nations!
Michel Steno. Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.
Ang. Sage Benintende, now chief Judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon Signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weighed in mind with Loredano's daughter,
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is: would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such

Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
Of Virtue, looking not to what is called
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are—alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the Whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom Dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than Death, here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at Vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of Pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery;[1] let what we now[i]
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's Dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's Dishonour unkinged Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perished for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula[2]
His life, while Earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couched in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A Senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrowned a Prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!

i. *Of his high aiery* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [The accepted spelling is "aerie." The word is said to be derived from the Latin *atrium*. The form *eyry*, or *eyrie*, was introduced by Spelman (*Gl.* 1664) to countenance an erroneous derivation from the Saxon *eghe*, an egg. *N. Eng. Dict.*, art. "aerie."]

2. [*Vide* Suetonius, *De XII. Cæsaribus*, lib. iv. cap. 56, ed. 1691, p. 427. Angiolina might surely have omitted this particular instance of the avenging vigilance of "Great Nemesis."]

Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan[1]
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him—'twere a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a Hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers;
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
And no resentment: things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 'tis the charter
Of Life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crushed, but feels no anger:
'Twas the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.[2]

Doge (*to Ben.*). Signor! complete that which you deem your duty.[i]

Ben. Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the Princess to withdraw;
'Twill move her too much to be witness to it.

Ang. I know it will, and yet I must endure it,
For 'tis a part of mine—I will not quit,
Except by force, my husband's side—Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear;
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.—Speak!
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

i. —— *you call your duty.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [The story is told in Plutarch's *Alexander*, cap. 38. Compare—

"And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And like another Helen, fired another Troy."
Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, vi. lines 25-28.]

2. [Byron's imagination was prone to dwell on the "earthworm's slimy brood." Compare *Childe Harold*, Canto II. stanzas v., vi. Dallas (*Recollections of Lord Byron*, 1824, p. 124) once ventured to remind his noble connection "that although our senses make us acquainted with the chemical decomposition of our bodies," there were other and more hopeful considerations to be entertained. But Byron was obdurate, "and the worms crept in and the worms crept out" as unpleasantly as heretofore.]

Ben. Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Intrusted by the state with high employments,
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of Treachery and Treason, yet unheard of[i.]
Until this trial—the decree is Death—
Thy goods are confiscate unto the State,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,[ii.]
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great Enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath,—
"This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes."[1]

Doge. "His *crimes!*"[2]

i. —— *never heard of.*—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

ii. *For this almost* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["Hic est locus Marini Falethri, decapitati pro criminibus." Even more impressive is the significant omission of the minutes of the trial from the pages of the State Register. "The fourth volume of the *Misti Consiglio X.* contains its decrees in the year 1355. On Friday, the 17th April in that year, Marin Falier was beheaded. In the usual course, the minutes of the trial should have been entered on the thirty-third page of that volume; but in their stead we find a blank space, and the words 'N SCBATUR:' 'Be it not written.'"—*Calendar of State Papers . . .* in Venice, Preface by Rawdon Brown, 1864, i. xvii.]

2. [Lines 500–507 were forwarded in a letter to Murray, dated Marzo, 1821 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 261). According to Moore's footnote, "These lines—perhaps from some difficulty in introducing them—were never inserted in the Tragedy." It is true that in some copies of the first edition of *Marino Faliero* (1821, p. 151) these lines do not appear; but in other copies of the first edition, in the second and other editions, they occur in their place. It is strange that Moore, writing in 1830, did not note the almost immediate insertion of these remarkable lines.]

But let it be so:—it will be in vain.
The veil which blackens o'er this blighted name,
And hides, or seems to hide, these lineaments,
Shall draw more gazers than the thousand portraits
Which glitter round it in their pictured trappings—
Your delegated slaves—the people's tyrants!
"Decapitated for his crimes!"—*What* crimes?
Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?
When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

Ben. Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and Cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giants' Staircase,
Where thou and all our Princes are invested;
And there, the Ducal Crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

Doge. Is this the Giunta's sentence?

Ben. It is.

Doge. I can endure it.—And the time?

Ben. Must be immediate.—Make thy peace with God:
Within an hour thou must be in His presence.

Doge. I am *already;* and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.
Are all my lands confiscated?[1]

Ben. They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats—these dispose of.

Doge. That's harsh.—I would have fain reserved the lands
Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment

1. [The Council of Ten decided that the possessions of Faliero should be confiscated; but the "Signoria," as an act of grace, and *ob ducatûs reverentiam*, allowed him to dispose of 2000 "lire dei grossi" of his own. The same day, April 17, the Doge dictated his will to the notary Piero de Compostelli, leaving the 2000 lire to his wife Aluica. —*La Congiura*, p. 105.]

From Laurence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,[i]
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.
Ben. These
Lie under the state's ban—their Chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the Council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou will'st a state unto thy widowed Princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.
Ang. Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.
Doge. Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 'twill end.
Have I aught else to undergo save Death?[ii]
Ben. You have nought to do, except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.—But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.
Doge. The Doge!
Ben. Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die
A Sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The Prince. Thy vile accomplices have died

i. *Of the house of Rizzando Caminese.*—[*MS. M.*]
ii. *Have I aught else to undergo ere Death?*—
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath, and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy Senate; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever, on the self-same spot.
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*The Doge's Apartment.*

The Doge *as Prisoner, and the* Duchess *attending him.*

Doge. Now, that the priest is gone, 'twere useless all
To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling—I have done with Time.

Ang. Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast sealed thine own.

Doge. Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now—
And yet it was foretold me.

Ang. How foretold you?

Doge. Long years ago—so long, they are a doubt[1]
In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the Senate
And Signory as Podesta and Captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day

1. [The story as related by Sanudo is of doubtful authenticity, *vide ante*, p. 332, *note* 1.]

Of festival, the sluggish Bishop who
Conveyed the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof: I raised my hand and smote him,
Until he reeled beneath his holy burthen;[i]
And as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,
He turned to me, and said, "The Hour will come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee:
The Glory shall depart from out thy house,
The Wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of Mind
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;[ii]
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And Majesty which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
But prove to thee the heralds of Destruction,
And hoary hairs of Shame, and both of Death,
But not such death as fits an aged man."
Thus saying, he passed on.—That Hour is come.

Ang. And with this warning couldst thou not have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone,
By penitence, for that which thou hadst done?

Doge. I own the words went to my heart, so much
That I remembered them amid the maze
Of Life, as if they formed a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 'twas not for me
To pull in resolution:[1] what must be
I could not change, and would not fear.—Nay more,
Thou can'st not have forgot, what all remember,

i. *Until he rolled beneath* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]
ii. *A madness of the heart shall rise within.*—
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Compare—
"I pull in resolution."
Macbeth, act v. sc. 5, line 42.]

That on my day of landing here as Doge,[1]
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before
The Bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which ushered Israel out of Egypt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembarked us
Between the Pillars of Saint Mark's, where 'tis
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
So that all Venice shuddered at the omen.
Ang. Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.
Doge. And yet I find a comfort in
The thought, that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to Gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling Power; they in themselves
Were all incapable—they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquered for them.
Ang. Employ the minutes left in aspirations
Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to Heaven.
Doge. I *am* at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure Hour will come, when their sons' sons,
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean Babel.
Ang. Speak not thus now: the surge of Passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
Thyself, and canst not injure them—be calmer.
Doge. I stand within Eternity, and see

i. —— *whom I know*
To be as worthless as the dust they trample.—[*MS. M. erased.*]

1. [See the translation of Sanudo's narrative in Appendix, p. 463.]

Into Eternity, and I behold—
Aye, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time—the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.
Guard (*coming forward*). Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your Highness.
Doge. Then farewell, Angiolina!—one embrace—
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and Wealth, and Power, and Fame, and Name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived everything, except thy heart,
The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpaired but not a clamorous grief[1]
Still keep——Thou turn'st so pale!—Alas! she faints,
She has no breath, no pulse!—Guards! lend your aid—
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 'tis better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—
One look!—how cold her hand!—as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks——I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of* ANGIOLINA *enter, and surround their Mistress, who has fainted.—Exeunt the* DOGE, *Guards, etc., etc.*

1. *With unimpaired but not outrageous grief.—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

SCENE III.—*The Court of the Ducal Palace; the outer gates are shut against the people.—The* DOGE *enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the* COUNCIL OF TEN *and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the "Giants' Staircase"*[1] *(where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword.—On arriving, a* CHIEF OF THE TEN *takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

Doge. So now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'Tis well to be so, though but for a moment.[i.]
Here was I crowned, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

One of the Ten. Thou tremblest, Faliero!

Doge. 'Tis with age, then.[2]

Ben. Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the Senate?

Doge. I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks

i. *I am glad to be so* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [An anachronism, *vide ante*, p. 336.]

2. This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, "Venice Preserved," a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's chef-d'œuvre.

["Still crueller was the fate of poor Bailly [Jean Sylvani, born September 17, 1736], First National President, First Mayor of Paris. . . . It is the 10th of November, 1793, a cold bitter drizzling rain, as poor Bailly is led through the streets. . . . Silent, unpitied, sits the innocent old man. . . . The Guillotine is taken down . . . is carried to the river-side; is there set up again, with slow numbness; pulse after pulse still counting itself out in the old man's weary heart. For hours long; amid curses and bitter frost-rain! 'Bailly, thou tremblest,' said one. '*Mon ami*, it is for cold,' said Bailly, '*C'est de froid.*' Crueller end had no mortal."—Carlyle's *French Revolution*, 1839, iii. 264.]

My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the State and me.
Ben. They shall be cared for;
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.
Doge. Unheard of! aye, there's not a history
But shows a thousand crowned conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free,
One Sovereign only died, and one is dying.
Ben. And who were they who fell in such a cause?
Doge. The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice—
Agis and Faliero!
Ben. Hast thou more
To utter or to do?
Doge. May I speak?
Ben. Thou may'st;
But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.
Doge. I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye Elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a Spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which fluttered o'er as if you loved it,
And filled my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for! and thou, foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou Sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns!—Attest![i]
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless?
I perish, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of Time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud City, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever!——Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,

i. *Who makest and destroyest suns!—*
[*MS. M. Vide letter of February* 2, 1821.]

Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield,
Unto a bastard Attila,[1] without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence,
As these old veins, oft drained in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her![2]—She shall stoop to be

1. [In his reply to the envoys of the Venetian Senate (April, 1797), Buonaparte threatened to "prove an Attila to Venice. If you cannot," he added, "disarm your population, I will do it in your stead—your government is antiquated—it must crumble to pieces."—Scott's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1828, p. 230. Compare, too, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV. stanza xc. lines 1, 2—

"The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar," etc.]

2. Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their "nostre bene merite Meretrici" at 12,000 of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is, perhaps, the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants: there are now about ninety thousand; and THESE!! few individuals can conceive, and none could describe, the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city. From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the Barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and, alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the memorable action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of "La Biondina in Gondoleta." There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the "Biondina," etc., and many other estimable productions; and, not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, etc., etc., I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner*, at least a *stranger* (*forestière*).

[This note is not in the MS. The first eight lines were included among the notes, and the remainder formed part of the Appendix in all editions 1821–1831.

Nicolò Pasqualigo (1770–1821) received the command of a ship in

A province for an Empire, petty town
In lieu of Capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people![i]
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces,[1]

i. *Beggars for nobles,* { *lazars* / *lepers* / *wretches* } *for a people!*—[*MS. M.*]

the Austrian Navy in 1800, and in 1805 was appointed Director of the Arsenal of Venice. He took part in both the Lissa expeditions, and was made prisoner after a prolonged resistance, March 13, 1811. (See *Personaggi illustri della Veneta patrizia gente*, by E. A. Cicogna, 1822, p. 33. See, too, for Lissa, *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 25, *note* 3.)

The Abate Jacopo Morelli (1745–1819), known as *Principe dei Bibliotecarj*, became custodian of the Marciana Library in 1778, and devoted the whole of his long and laborious life to the service of literature. (For a list of his works, etc., see Tipaldo's *Biografia, etc.*, 1835, ii. 481. See, too, *Elogio di Jacopo Morelli*, by A. Zendrini, Milano, 1822.)

Alvisi Querini, brother to Marina Querini Benzon, published in 1759 a poem entitled *L'Ammiraglio dell' Indie*. He wrote under a pseudonym, Ormildo Emeressio.

Vittore Benzon (d. 1822), whose mother, Marina, was celebrated by Anton Maria Lamberti (1757–1832) as *La biondina in gondoleta* (*Poesie*, 1817, i. 20), was the author of *Nella*, a love-poem, abounding in political allusions. (See Tipaldo, v. 122, and *Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, I Suoi amici*, by V. Malamani, 1882, pp. 119, 136.)

Il Conte Domenico Morosini (see *Lettere*, Venezia, 1829) was the author of two tragedies, *Medea in Corinto* and *Giulio Sabino*, published in 1806.

Giustina Renier Michiel (1755–1832) was niece to the last Doge, Lodovico Manin. Her *salon* was the centre of a brilliant circle of friends, including such names as Pindemonte, Foscolo, and Cesarotti. Her translation of *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *Coriolanus* formed part of the *Opere Drammatiche di Shakspeare*, published in Venice in 1797. Her work, *Origine delle Feste Veneziane*, was published at Milan in 1829. (See *G. R. Michiel, Archivio Veneto*, tom. xxxviii. 1889.)

Luigi Carrer (1801–1856) began life as a lawyer, but afterwards devoted himself to poetry and literature. He was secretary of the Venetian Institute in 1842, and, later, Director of the Carrer Museum. (See Gio. Crespan, *Della vita e delle lettere di Luigi Carrer*, 1869.)

For Giuseppino Albrizzi (1800–1860), and for Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, Countess Albrizzi (? 1761–1836), see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 14, *note* 1; and for Francesco Aglietti (1757–1836), Leopoldo Cicognara (1767–1835), and Andreas Moustoxudes (1787–1860), see *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 324, *note* 1.

The "younger Dandolo" may be Conte Girolamo Antonio Dandolo, author of *Sui Quattro Cavalli, etc.*, published in 1817, and of *La Caduta della Repubblica di Venezia*, 1855. By "Bucati" may possibly be meant the satirist Pietro Buratti (1772–1832). (See *Poesie Veneziane*, by R. Barbiera, 1886, p. 209.)]

1. The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his;
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity;
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vice-gerent,[1]
Even in the Palace where they swayed as Sovereigns,
Even in the Palace where they slew their Sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation;—when
Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turned o'er to the vanquished by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorned even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entailed on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution;—
When all the ills of conquered states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, Sin without relief[1, 2]
Even from the gloss of Love to smooth it o'er,
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,[3]

1. *Vice without luxury* ——.—[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. [Napoleon was crowned King of Italy, May 3, 1805. Venice was ceded by Austria, December 26, 1805, and shortly after, Eugène Beauharnais was appointed Viceroy of Italy, with the title of Prince of Venice. It is certain that the "Vice-gerent" stands for Beauharnais, but it is less evident why Byron, doubtless quoting from *Hamlet*, calls Napoleon the "Vice of Kings." Did he mean a "player-king," one who not being a king acted the part, as the "vice" in the old moralities; or did he misunderstand Shakespeare, and seek to depreciate Beauharnais as the Viceroy of a Viceroy, that is Joseph Bonaparte?]

2. [Compare—

"When Vice walks forth with her unsoftened terrors."
Ode on Venice, line 34, *vide ante*, p. 194.]

3. See Appendix, Note C.

Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,
Depraving Nature's frailty to an art;—
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without Pleasure,
Youth without Honour, Age without respect,
Meanness and Weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur,[1]
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of Princes![2]
Gehenna of the waters! thou Sea-Sodom![1, 3]

1. *Thou brothel of the waters! thou sea Sodom!—*
[*Alternative reading. MS. M.*]

1. If the Doges prophecy seem remarkable, look to the following, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago:—"There is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.' If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697: and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni addressed to Venice; which, however, no one has pointed out:—

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Sat., xii. ed. 1531, p. 413.

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less."—P. L. GINGUENÉ, *Hist. Lit. d'Italie*, ix. 144 [Paris Edition, 1819].

2. Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated—*five* were banished with their eyes put out—*five* were MASSACRED—and *nine* deposed; so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Marino Faliero himself perished as related. Amongst his successors, *Foscari*, after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say,—

"Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!"

3. [See letters to Webster, September 8, 1818, and to Hoppner December 31, 1819, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 255, 393.]

Thus I devote thee to the Infernal Gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!
[*Here the* DOGE *turns and addresses the Excutioner.*
Slave, do thine office!
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike—and but once!
[*The* DOGE *throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.—*The Piazza and Piazzetta of St. Mark's.—The people in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.*

First Citizen. I have gained the Gate, and can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.
Second Cit. I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.
First Cit. One has approached the Doge, and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now
He raises his keen eyes to Heaven; I see
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush! hush!—no,
'Twas but a murmur—Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like muttered thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence!
Second Cit. Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.
First Cit. 'Tis vain.
I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air——Ah! hark! it falls!
[*The people murmur.*
Third Cit. Then they have murdered him who would have freed us.
Fourth Cit. He was a kind man to the commons ever.

Fifth Cit. Wisely they did to keep their portals barred.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summoned here—we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!

Sixth Cit. Are you sure he's dead?

First Cit. I saw the sword fall—Lo! what have we here?

Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts St. Mark's Place a CHIEF OF THE TEN,[1] *with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

"Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!"

[*The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the "Giants' Staircase," where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

"The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!"[1, 2]

[*The curtain falls.*[3]

1. *The gory head is rolling down the steps!*
The head is rolling down the gory steps!—
[*Alternative readings. MS. M.*]

1. "Un Capo de' Dieci" are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

2. [A picture in oils of the execution of Marino Faliero, by Ferdinand Victor Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863), which was exhibited in the Salon in 1827, is now in the Wallace Collection (*Provisional Catalogue*, 1900, p. 28).]

3. [End of the Historical Tragedy of Marino Faliero, or the Doge of Venice.

Begun April 4th, 1820.
Completed July 16th, 1820.
Finished copying in August 16th, 17th, 1820.

The which copying takes ten times the toil of composing, considering the weather—*thermometer* 90 *in the shade*—and my domestic duties.
The motto is—

"Dux inquietæ turbidus Adriæ."
Horace.]

APPENDIX.

Note A.

I am obliged for the following excellent translation of the old Chronicle to Mr. F. Cohen,[1] to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself—though after many years' intercourse with Italian—have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.

Story of Marino Faliero, Doge XLIX. mccccliv.[2]

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord, 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight, and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be despatched to Marino Faliero the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for when he was chosen, he was

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1. Mr. Francis Cohen, afterwards Sir Francis Palgrave (1788–1861), the author of the *Rise and Progress of the English Constitution*, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, etc., etc.

2. [In the earlier editions (1821–1825) Francis Cohen's translation (Appendix II.) is preceded by an Italian version (Appendix I.), taken directly from Muratori's edition of Marin Sanudo's *Vite dei Dogi* (*Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 1733, xxii. 628–635). The two versions are by no means identical. Cohen's "translation" is, presumably, an accurate rendering of Sanudo's text, and must have been made either from the original MS. or from a transcript sent from Italy to England. Muratori's Italian is a *rifacimento* of the original, which has been altered and condensed with a view to convenience or literary effect. Proper names of persons and places are changed, Sanudo's Venetian dialect gives place to Muratori's Italian, and notes which Sanudo added in the way of illustration and explanation are incorporated in the text. In the *Life of Marino Faliero*, pp. 199, 200 of the original text are omitted, and a passage from an old chronicle, which Sanudo gives as a note, is made to appear part of the original narrative. (See Preface to *Le Vite dei Dogi di Marin Sanudo*, by G. Monticolo, 1900; *Marino Faliero, La Congiura*, by V. Lazzarino; *Nuovo Archivio Veneto*, 1897, vol. xiii. pt. i. p. 15, *note* 1.)]

ambassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome,—the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero the Duke was about to land in this city, on the 5th day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on and darkened the air: and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns, on the spot where evil doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle.—When Messer Marino Faliero was Podesta and Captain of Treviso, the Bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now, the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful, that he buffeted the Bishop, and almost struck him to the ground: and, therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he, being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself Lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull hunt took place as usual; and, according to the usage of those times, after the bull hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo [*i.e.* platform]; and the esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the Duchess upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon—"*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*"[1] In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largess of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori, in order to discover who had written these words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed that in the fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover; and therefore they

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1. ["*Marin Faliero dalla bella moglie: altri la gode, ed egli la mantien.*" According to Andrea Navagero (*It. Rer. Script.*, xxiii. 1038), the writing on the chair ran thus: "*Becco Marino Falier dalla bella mogier*" (*vide ante*, p. 349). Palgrave has bowdlerized Steno's lampoon.]

adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him, that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal, and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the Admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered, No, it cannot be done. High words arose between the gentleman and the Admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the Admiral and drew blood. The Admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Cà Barbaro.—"What wouldst thou have me do for thee?" answered the Duke: "think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me; and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person."—Upon this the Admiral answered, "My Lord Duke, if you would wish to make yourself a prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all." Hearing this, the Duke said, "How can such a matter be brought about?"—and so they discoursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed about this plot. And without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertuccio Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then taking counsel among themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so, for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit:—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiono, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisano.—It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco; these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the 15th day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and

who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light, in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the above-mentioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars; and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the 15th of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him, and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Cornaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Councillors, the Avogadori, the Capi de' Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon their measures. And they sent for the Capi de' Quarante, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de' Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, and secure them. And they secured the foreman of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and, as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following:—Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grando, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tomaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junta of

twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest, and the worthiest, and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty :— Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri du Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten ; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke : and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertuccio Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga, were also taken, together with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the 16th of April judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertuccio Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the bull hunt : and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned :—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money-changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days ; some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it ; for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals ; and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciricolo and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the 16th day of April, judgment was also given in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his head cut off ; and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the 17th of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St. Mark, and that he showed the

bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice—"The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!"—and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke, who had been beheaded.

It must be known that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the councillors and all the Avogadori of the Commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta, who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were, Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a Chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraven thereon: "*Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*" —And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council: —but in the place where it ought to have been, you see these words:— "*Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.*"—And it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo; it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid:—"*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus.*"—Others, also, indited a couplet, worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

"*Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,*
Sceptra, decus, censum perdidit, atque caput."

Note B.

Petrarch on the Conspiracy of Marino Faliero.[1]

Al giovane doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timone della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che facea d' uopo a lui ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di coraggio, che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo: imperciocchè questo doge dei Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fu sempre venerato qual nume in quella città, l' altr'jeri fu decollato nel vestibolo dell' istesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale evento, se così vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido: nessuno però lo scusa, tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui tramandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d' avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli uffici di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fu conferito l' onore del ducato, che nè chiedeva, nè s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello, che a niuno accadde mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeberrimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fu trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Ho notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' anno del Natale di Cristo, 1355, fu il giorno diciotto aprile sì alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un solo uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nella Italia. Tu forse qui attendi il mio giudizio: assolvo il popolo, se credere si dee alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitemente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non così facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grande in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' iracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell'infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore, non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata apparirà, che egli fu non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i dogi, i quali gli succederanno, che questo è un' esempio posto innanzi ai loro occhi, quale specchio, nel quale veggano d' essere non signori, ma duci, anzi nemmeno duci, ma onorati servi della

1. ["Had a copy taken of an extract from Petrarch's Letters, with reference to the conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero, containing the poet's opinion of the matter."—*Diary*, February 11, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 201.]

Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le pubbliche cose, sforziamoci di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari."—*Viaggi di Francesco Petrarca*, descritti dal Professore Ambrogio Levati, Milano, 1820, iv. 323-325.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch proves—1stly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's; "antica dimestichezza," old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet. 2dly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, "più di *coraggio* che di senno." 3dly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch; for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had "vainly attempted to conclude." 4thly, That the honour of the Dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, "che nè chiedeva, nè aspettava," and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, "ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro," a proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held. 5thly, That he had a reputation for *wisdom*, *only* forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, "si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza."—"He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom," rather a difficult task, I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.—From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred, that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr. Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, "that there had been no greater event in his times" (*our times* literally), "nostri tempi," in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was "on the banks of the *Rhone*," instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say, that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

Note C.

Venetian Society and Manners.

"Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er;
But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude," etc.

"To these attacks so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,—to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies,—to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,—to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy; we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

"That freedom of manners, which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness: the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract,

they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alleged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, became so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782 the Council of Ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court.[1] Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself.[2] This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance from Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.[3]

"There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtesans were banished from Venice; but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recall, and even to indemnify,[4] women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing; and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.[5]

"The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtesans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at

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1. Correspondence of M. Schlick, French chargé d'affaires. Despatch of 24th August, 1782.

2. *Ibid.* Despatch, 31st August.

3. *Ibid.* Despatch of 3d September, 1785.

4. The decree for their recall designates them as *nostre benemerite meretrici:* a fund and some houses, called *Case rampane*, were assigned to them; hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampane.* [The writer of the Preface to *Leggi e memorie Venete sulla Prostituzione*, which was issued from Lord Orford's private press in 1870, maintains that the designation is mythical. "Tale asserzione che non ha verum fondamento, salvo che nella imaginazione di chi primo la scrisse lo storico francese Daru non si fece scrupolo di ripetuta ciecamente. Fu altresi ripetuta da Lord Byron e da altri," etc. The volume, a sumptuous folio, prints a series of rescripts promulgated by the Venetian government against *meretrici* and other disagreeable persons.]

5. Meyer, Description of Venice, vol. ii.; and M. de Archenholtz, Picture of Italy, vol. i. sect. 2, pp. 65, 66. [*Voyage en Italie*, par F. J. L. Meyer, An X. cap. iii.]

the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was a strange sight to see persons of either sex masked, or grave in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

"The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence."—DARU, *Hist. de la Républ. de Vénise*, Paris, 1821, v. 328–332.

The author of "Sketches Descriptive of Italy," (1820), etc., one of the hundred tours lately published, is extremely anxious to disclaim a possible plagiarism from *Childe Harold* and *Beppo*. See p. 159, vol. iv. He adds that still less could this presumed coincidence arise from "my conversation," as he had "*repeatedly declined an introduction to me while in Italy*."

Who this person may be I know not;[1] but he must have been deceived by all or any of those who "repeatedly offered to introduce" him, as I invariably refused to receive any English with whom I was not previously acquainted, even when they had letters from England. If the whole assertion is not an invention, I request this person not to sit down with the notion that he COULD have been introduced, since there has been nothing I have so carefully avoided as any kind of intercourse with his countrymen,—excepting the very few who were for a considerable time resident in Venice, or had been of my previous acquaintance. Whoever made him any such offer was possessed of impudence equal to that of making such an assertion without having had it. The fact is, that I hold in utter abhorrence any contact with the travelling English, as my friend the Consul General Hoppner and the Countess Benzoni (in whose house the Conversazione mostly frequented by them is held), could amply testify, were it worth while. I was persecuted by these tourists even to my riding ground at Lido, and reduced to the most disagreeable circuits to avoid them. At Madame Benzoni's I repeatedly refused to be introduced to them;—of a thousand such presentations pressed upon me, I accepted two, and both were to Irish women.

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1. [In a letter to Murray, September 11, 1820 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 75, 84), Byron writes, "Last post I sent you a note fierce as Faliero himself, in answer to a trashy tourist, who pretends that he could have been introduced to me;" but at the end of the month, September 29, 1820, he withdraws his animadversions: "I open my letter to say, that on reading more of the 4 volumes on Italy [*Sketches descriptive of Italy in the Years* 1816, 1817, etc., by Miss Jane Waldie] . . . I perceive (*horresco referens*) that it is written by a WOMAN!!! In that case you must suppress my note and answer. . . . I can only say that I am sorry that a Lady should say anything of the kind. What I would have said to one of the other sex you know already." Nevertheless, the note was appended to the first edition, which appeared April 21, 1821.]

I should hardly have descended to speak of such trifles publicly, if the impudence of this "sketcher" had not forced me to a refutation of a disingenuous and gratuitously impertinent assertion; so meant to be, for what could it import to the reader to be told that the author "had repeatedly declined an introduction," even if it had been true, which, for the reasons I have above given, is scarcely possible. Except Lords Lansdowne, Jersey, and Lauderdale, Messrs. Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphry Davy, the late M. Lewis, W. Bankes, Mr. Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr. Joy, and Mr. Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their Country; and almost all these I had known before. The others,—and God knows there were some hundreds, who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with, and shall be proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT TYLER."

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."
[*Merchant of Venice*, act iv. sc. 1, lines 218, 336.]

INTRODUCTION TO *THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.*

BYRON'S *Vision of Judgment* is a parody of Southey's *Vision of Judgement.*

The acts or fyttes of the quarrel between Byron and Southey occur in the following order. In the summer of 1817 Southey, accompanied by his friends, Humphrey Senhouse and the artist Edward Nash, passed some weeks (July) in Switzerland. They visited Chamouni, and at Montanvert, in the travellers' album, they found, in Shelley's handwriting, a Greek hexameter verse, in which he affirmed that he was an "atheist," together with an indignant comment ("fool!" also in Greek) superadded in an unknown hand (see *Life of Shelley*, by E. Dowden, 1886, ii. 30, *note*). Southey copied this entry into his note-book, and "spoke of the circumstance on his return" (circ. August 12, 1817). In the course of the next year some one told Byron that a rumour had reached England that he and Shelley "had formed a league of incest with two sisters," and that Southey and Coleridge were the authors of the scandal. There is nothing to show through what channel the report of the rumour reached Byron's ears, but it may be inferred that it was in his mind (see Letter to Murray, November 24, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 272) when he assailed Southey in the "Dedication" ("in good, simple, savage verse") to the First Canto of *Don Juan*, which was begun September 6, 1818. Shelley, who was already embittered against Southey (see the account of a dinner at Godwin's, November 6, 1817, *Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, ii. 67), heard Byron read this "Dedication," and, in a letter to Peacock (October 8, 1818), describes it as being "more like a mixture of wormwood and verdigrease than satire."

When *Don Juan* appeared (July 15, 1819), the "Dedication" was not forthcoming, but of its existence and character Southey had been informed. "Have you heard," he asks

(Letter to the Rev. H. Hill, *Selections from the Letters, etc.*, 1856, iii. 142), "that *Don Juan* came over with a Dedication to me, in which Lord Castlereagh and I . . . were coupled together for abuse as the 'two Roberts'? A fear of persecution (*sic*) from the *one* Robert is supposed to be the reason why it has been suppressed. Lord Byron might have done well to remember that the other can write dedications also; and make his own cause good, if it were needful, in prose or rhyme, against a villain, as well as against a slanderer."

When George III. died (January 29, 1820), it became the duty of the "laurel-honouring laureate" to write a funeral ode, and in composing a Preface, in vindication of the English hexameter, he took occasion "incidentally to repay some of his obligations to Lord Byron by a few comments on *Don Juan*" (Letter to the Rev. H. Hill, January 8, 1821, *Selections, etc.*, iii. 225). He was, no doubt, impelled by other and higher motives to constitute himself a *censor morum*, and take up his parable against the spirit of the age as displayed and fostered in *Don Juan* (see a letter to Wynne, March 23, 1821, *Selections, etc.*, iii. 238), but the suppressed "Dedication" and certain gibes, which had been suffered to appear, may be reckoned as the immediate causes of his anathema.

Southey's *Vision of Judgement* was published April 11, 1821—an undivine comedy, in which the apotheosis of George III., the beatification of the virtuous, and the bale and damnation of such egregious spirits as Robespierre, Wilkes, and Junius, are "thrown upon the screen" of the showman or lecturer. Southey said that the "Vision" ought to be read aloud, and, if the subject could be forgotten and ignored, the hexameters might not sound amiss, but the subject and its treatment are impossible and intolerable. The "Vision" would have "made sport" for Byron in any case, but, in the Preface, Southey went out of his way to attack and denounce the anonymous author of *Don Juan*.

"What, then," he asks (ed. 1838, x. 204), "should be said of those for whom the thoughtlessness and inebriety of wanton youth can no longer be pleaded, but who have written in sober manhood, and with deliberate purpose? . . . Men of diseased hearts and depraved imaginations, who, forming a system of opinions to suit their own unhappy course of conduct, have rebelled against the holiest ordinances of human society, and hating that revealed religion which, with all their efforts and bravadoes, they are unable entirely to disbelieve, labour to make others as miserable as themselves, by infecting them with a moral virus that eats into the soul! The school which they have set up may properly be called

the Satanic school; for, though their productions breathe the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent, they are more especially characterized by a Satanic pride and audacious impiety, which still betrays the wretched feeling of hopelessness wherewith it is allied."

Byron was not slow to take up the challenge. In the "Appendix" to the *Two Foscari* (first ed., pp. 325–329), which was written at Ravenna, June–July, but not published till December 11, 1821, he retaliates on "Mr. Southey and his 'pious preface'" in many words; but when it comes to the point, ignores the charge of having "published a lascivious book," and endeavours by counter-charges to divert the odium and to cover his adversary with shame and confusion. "Mr. S.," he says, "with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated 'death-bed repentance' of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant 'Vision of Judgment,' in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. . . . I am not ignorant," he adds, "of Mr. Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad on his return from Switzerland against me and others. . . . What *his* 'death-bed' may be it is not my province to predicate; let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all works sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow-creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk."

Southey must have received his copy of the *Two Foscari* in the last week of December, 1821, and with the "Appendix" (to say nothing of the Third Canto of *Don Juan*) before him, he gave tongue, in the pages of the *Courier*, January 6, 1822. His task was an easy one. He was able to deny, *in toto*, the charge of uttering calumnies on his return from Switzerland, and he was pleased to word his denial in a very disagreeable way. He had come home with a stock of travellers' tales, but not one of them was about Lord Byron. He had "sought for no staler subject than St. Ursula." His charges of "impiety," "lewdness," "profanation," and "pollution," had not been answered, and were unanswerable; and as to his being a "scribbler of all work," there were exceptions—works which he had *not* scribbled, the *nefanda* which disfigured the writings of Lord Byron. "Satanic school" would stick.

So far, the battle went in Southey's favour. "The words

of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel," and Byron was reduced to silence. A challenge (sent through Kinnaird, but not delivered) was but a confession of impotence. There was, however, in Southey's letter to the *Courier* just one sentence too many. Before he concluded he had given "one word of advice to Lord Byron"—"When he attacks me again, let it be in rhyme. For one who has so little command of himself, it will be a great advantage that his temper should be obliged to *keep tune*."

Byron had anticipated this advice, and had already attacked the laureate in rhyme, scornfully and satirically, but with a gay and genial mockery which dispensed with "wormwood and verdigrease" or yet bitterer and more venomous ingredients.

There was a truth in Lamb's jest, that it was Southey's *Vision of Judgement* which was worthy of prosecution; that "Lord Byron's poem was of a most good-natured description —no malevolence" (*Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, ii. 240). Good-natured or otherwise, it awoke inextinguishable laughter, and left Byron in possession of the field.

The *Vision of Judgment*, begun May 7 (but probably laid aside till September 11), was forwarded to Murray October 4, 1821. "By this post," he wrote to Moore, October 6, 1821 (*Letters*, 1901, v. 387), "I have sent my nightmare to balance the incubus of Southey's impudent anticipation of the Apotheosis of George the Third." A chance perusal of Southey's letter in the *Courier* (see Medwin's *Conversations*, 1824, p. 222, and letters to Douglas Kinnaird, February 6, 25, 1822) quickened his desire for publication; but in spite of many appeals and suggestions to Murray, who had sent Byron's "copy" to his printer, the decisive step of passing the proofs for press was never taken. At length Byron lost patience, and desired Murray to hand over "the corrected copy of the proof with the Preface" of the *Vision of Judgment* to John Hunt (see letters to Murray, July 3, 6, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 92, 93). Finally, a year after the MS. had been sent to England, the *Vision of Judgment*, by Quevedo Redivivus, appeared in the first number (pp. 1–39) of the *Liberal*, which was issued October 15, 1822. The Preface, to Byron's astonishment and annoyance, was not forthcoming (see letter to Murray, October 22, 1822, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 126, and *Examiner*, Sunday, November 3, 1822, p. 697), and is not prefixed to the first issue of the *Vision of Judgment* in the first number of the *Liberal*.

The *Liberal* was severely handled by the press (see, for example, the *Literary Gazette* for October 19, 26, November 2, 1822; see, too, an anonymous pamphlet

entitled *A Critique on the "Liberal"* (London, 1822, 8vo, 16 pages), which devotes ten pages to an attack on the *Vision of Judgment*). The daily press was even more violent. The *Courier* for October 26 begins thus : "This *scoundrel-like* publication has at length made its appearance."

There was even a threat of prosecution. Byron offered to employ counsel for Hunt, to come over to England to stand his trial in his stead, and blamed Murray for not having handed over the corrected proof, in which some of the more offensive passages had been omitted or mitigated (see letter to Murray, December 25, 1822, and letter to John Hunt, January 8, 1823, *Letters*, 1901, vi. 155, 159). It is to be noted that in the list of *Errata* affixed to the table of Contents at the end of the first volume of the *Liberal*, the words, a "weaker king ne'er," are substituted for "a worse king never" (stanza viii. line 6), and "an unhandsome woman" for "a bad, ugly woman" (stanza xii. line 8). It would seem that these emendations, which do not appear in the MS., were slipped into the *Errata* as precautions, not as after-thoughts.

Nevertheless, it was held that a publication "calumniating the late king, and wounding the feelings of his present Majesty," was a danger to the public peace, and on January 15, 1824, the case of the King *v.* John Hunt was tried in the Court of King's Bench. The jury brought in a verdict of "Guilty," but judgment was deferred, and it was not till July 19, 1824, three days after the author of the *Vision of Judgment* had been laid to rest at Hucknall Torkard, that the publisher was sentenced to pay to the king a fine of one hundred pounds, and to enter into securities, for five years, for a larger amount.

For the complete text of section iii. of Southey's Preface, Byron's "Appendix" to the *Two Foscari*, etc., see *Essays Moral and Political*, by Robert Southey, 1832, ii. 183, 205. See, too, for "Quarrel between Byron and Southey," Appendix I. of vol. vi. of *Letters of Lord Byron*, 1901.

NOTE.

The following excerpt from H. C. Robinson's *Diary* is printed from the original MS., with the kind permission of the trustees of Dr. Williams' Theological Library (see "Diary," 1869, ii. 437) :—

"[Weimar], August 15, [1829].

"W[ordsworth] will not put the nose of B[yron] out with Frau von

Goethe, but he will be appreciated by her. I am afraid of the experiment with the great poet himself. . . .

". . . I alone to the poet. . . .

"I read to him the *Vision of Judgment.* He enjoyed it like a child; but his criticisms went little beyond the exclamatory 'Toll! Ganz grob! himmlisch! unübertrefflich!' etc., etc.

"In general, the more strongly peppered passages pleased him the best. Stanza 9 he praised for the clear distinct painting; 10 he repeated with emphasis,—the last two lines conscious that his own age was eighty; 13, 14, and 15 are favourites with me. G. concurred in the suggested praise. The stanza 24 he declared to be sublime. The characteristic speeches of Wilkes and Junius he thought most admirable.

"Byron 'hat selbst viel übertroffen;' and the introduction of Southey made him laugh heartily.

"August 16.

"Lord B. he declared to be inimitable. Ariosto was not so *keck* as Lord B. in the *Vision of Judgment.*"

John Dawnman A.R.A. del

Robert Southey

from a drawing in the possession of Mr. Hallam Murray

PREFACE.

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed—

> "[That] fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
> [POPE'S *Essay on Criticism*, line 625.]

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be *worse*. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegado intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, except in his imagination, such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of *him;* for they laughed consumedly."[1]

1. ["Aye, he and the count's footman were jabbering French like two intriguing ducks in a mill-pond; and I believe they talked of me, for

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of *Wat Tyler?*

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?[1]

3rdly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, "a rancorous renegado?"[2]

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?[3]

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare *he* call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

they laughed consumedly."—Farquhar, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, act iii. sc. 2.]

1. [These were not the expressions employed by Lord Eldon. The Chancellor laid down the principle that "damages cannot be recovered for a work which is in its nature calculated to do an injury to the public," and assuming *Wat Tyler* to be of this description, he refused the injunction until Southey should have established his right to the property by an action. *Wat Tyler* was written at the age of nineteen, when Southey was a republican, and was entrusted to two booksellers, Messrs. Ridgeway and Symonds, who agreed to publish it, but never put it to press. The MS. was not returned to the author, and in February, 1817, at the interval of twenty-two years, when his sentiments were widely different, it was printed, to his great annoyance, by W. Benbow (see his *Scourge for the Laureate* (1825), p. 14), Sherwood, Neely and Jones, John Fairburn, and others. It was reported that 60,000 copies were sold (see *Life and Correspondence of R. Southey*, 1850, iv. 237, 241, 249, 252).]

2. [William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, attacked Southey in the House of Commons on the 14th of March, 1817, and the Laureate replied by a letter in the *Courier*, dated March 17, 1817, and by a letter "To William Smith, Esq., M.P." (see *Essays Moral and Political*, by R. Southey, 1832, ii. 7–31). The exact words used were, "the determined malignity of a renegade" (see Hansard's *Parl. Debates*, xxxv. 1088).]

3. [One of Southey's juvenile poems is an "Inscription for the Apartment in Chepstow Castle, where Henry Martin, the Regicide, was imprisoned thirty years" (see Southey's *Poems*, 1797, p. 59). Canning parodied it in the *Anti-jacobin* (see his well-known "Inscription for the Door of the Cell in Newgate, where Mrs. Brownrigg, the 'Prentice-cide, was confined, previous to her Execution," *Poetry of the Anti-jacobin*, 1828, p. 6).]

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the *Anti-jacobin*, by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"*qualis ab incepto*."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonise a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new *Vision*, his *public* career will not be more favourably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints, angels, and spiritual persons discourse in this *Vision*. But, for precedents upon such points, I must refer him to Fielding's *Journey from this World to the next*, and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in

Spanish or translated.[1] The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school-divine,"[2] but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of heaven; and Chaucer's *Wife of Bath*, Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, etc., may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

*** Mr. Southey being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer. It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the meantime have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor,"[3] who cultivates

1. [See "*The Vision, etc.*, made English by Sir R. Lestrange, and burlesqued by a Person of Quality:" *Visions, being a Satire on the corruptions and vices of all degrees of Mankind.* Translated from the original Spanish by Mr. Nunez, London, 1745, etc.

The Sueños or Visions of Francisco Gomez de Quevedo of Villegas are six in number. They were published separately in 1635. For an account of the "*Visita de los Chistes*," "A Visit in Jest to the Empire of Death," and for a translation of part of the "Dream of Skulls," or "Dream of the Judgment," see *History of Spanish Literature*, by George Ticknor, 1888, ii. 339–344.]

2. ["Milton's strong pinion now not Heav'n can bound,
Now Serpent-like, in prose he sweeps the ground,
In Quibbles, Angel and Archangel join,
And God the Father turns a School-divine."
Pope's *Imitations of Horace*, Book ii. Ep. i. lines 99–102.]

3. [Walter Savage Landor (1775–1864) had recently published a volume of Latin poems (*Idyllia Heroica Decem Librum Phaleuciorum Unum Partim jam primum Partim iterum atque tertio edit Savagius Landor.* Accedit Quæstiuncula cur Poetæ Latini Recentiores minus legantur, Pisis, 1820, 4to). In his Preface to the *Vision of Judgement*, Southey illustrates his denunciation of "Men of diseased hearts," etc. (*vide ante*, p. 476), by a quotation from the Latin essay: "Summi poetæ in omni poetarum sæculo viri fuerunt probi: in nostris id vidimus et videmus; neque alius est error a veritate longiùs quàm

much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the poet laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called "*Gebir*." Who could suppose, that in this same Gebir the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious sovereign:—

(Prince Gebir having descended into the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view; and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

"'Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
Listen! him yonder who, bound down supine,
Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung;
He too amongst my ancestors! [I hate
The despot, but the dastard I despise.
Was he our countryman?'
'Alas,]¹ O king!
Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.'
'He was a warrior then, nor fear'd the gods?'
'Gebir, he feared the Demons, not the gods,
Though them indeed his daily face adored;

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magna ingenia magnis necessario corrumpi vitiis," etc. (*Idyllia*, p. 197). It was a cardinal maxim of the Lake School "that there can be no great poet who is not a good man. . . . His heart must be pure" (see *Table Talk*, by S. T. Coleridge, August 20, 1833); and Landor's testimony was welcome and consolatory. "Of its author," he adds, "I will only say in this place, that, to have obtained his approbation as a poet, and possessed his friendship as a man, will be remembered among the honours of my life." Now, apart from the essay and its evident application, Byron had probably observed that among the *Phaleucia*, or Hendecasyllables, were included some exquisite lines *Ad Sutheium* (on the death of Herbert Southey), followed by some extremely unpleasant ones on *Taunto* and his tongue, and would naturally conclude that "Savagius" was ready to do battle for the Laureate if occasion arose. Hence the side issue. With regard to the "Ithyphallics," there are portions of the Latin poems (afterwards expunged, see *Poemata et Inscriptiones*, Moxon, 1847) included in the Pisa volume which might warrant the description; but from a note to *The Island* (Canto II. stanza xvii. line 10) it may be inferred that some earlier collection of Latin verses had come under Byron's notice. For Landor's various estimates of Byron's works and genius, see *Works*, 1876, iv. 44–46, 88, 89, etc.]

1. [The words enclosed in brackets were expunged in later editions.]

> And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
> Squandered, as stones to exercise a sling,
> And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
> Oh madness of mankind! addressed, adored!'"
> *Gebir* [*Works, etc.*, 1876, vii. 17].

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of "great moral lessons" are apt to be found in strange company.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.[1]

I.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"
The Devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And "a pull altogether," as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

II.

The Angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,[i.]
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

The Guardian Seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;[ii.]
Terrestrial business filled nought in the sky
Save the Recording Angel's black bureau;

i. *Or break a runaway* ——.—[*MS., alternative reading.*]
ii. *Finding their patients past all care and cure.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Ra[venna] May 7th, 1821.]

Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripped off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will, no doubt,
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,[i.]
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out
By the increased demand for his remarks:[ii.]
Six Angels and twelve Saints were named his clerks.

V.

This was a handsome board—at least for Heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many Conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day, too, slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—
The page was so besmeared with blood and dust.[iii.]

VI.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record
What Angels shrink from: even the very Devil
On this occasion his own work abhorred,
So surfeited with the infernal revel:
Though he himself had sharpened every sword,[iv.]
It almost quenched his innate thirst of evil.

i. *To turn him here and there for some resource*
And found no better counsel from his peers,
And claimed the help of his celestial peers.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *By the immense extent of his remarks.*—[*MS. erased.*]
iii. *The page was so splashed o'er* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]
iv. *Though he himself had helped the Conqueror's sword.*—[*MS. erased.*]

(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
'Tis, that he has both Generals in reversion.)[i. 1]

VII.

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, Hell as wont,
And Heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't;
'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,[ii.]
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.[iii.]

VIII.

In the first year of Freedom's second dawn [2]
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn [iv.]
Left him nor mental nor external sun: [3]
A better farmer ne'er brushed dew from lawn,[v.]
A worse king never left a realm undone!

i. *'Tis that he has that Conqueror in reversion.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *They will be crushed yet* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]
iii. *Not so gigantic in the head as horn.*—[*MS. erased.*]
iv. *Who fought for tyranny until withdrawn.*—[*MS. erased.*]
v. *A better country squire* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Napoleon died May 5, 1821, two days before Byron began his *Vision of Judgment*, but, of course, the news did not reach Europe till long afterwards.]

2. [George III. died the 29th of January, 1820. "The year 1820 was an era signalized . . . by the many efforts of the revolutionary spirit which at that time broke forth, like ill-suppressed fire, throughout the greater part of the South of Europe. In Italy Naples had already raised the constitutional standard. . . . Throughout Romagna, secret societies, under the name of Carbonari, had been organized."—*Life*, p. 467.]

3. ["Thus as I stood, the bell, which awhile from its warning had rested,
Sent forth its note again, TOLL! TOLL! through the silence of evening. . . .
Thou art released! I cried: thy soul is delivered from bondage!
Thou who hast lain so long in mental and visual darkness,
Thou art in yonder Heaven! thy place is in light and glory."
A Vision of Judgement, by R. Southey, i.]

He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.[i. 1]

IX.

He died! his death made no great stir on earth:
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet—gilding—brass—and no great dearth
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion:
For these things may be bought at their true worth;
Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,[2]

X.

Formed a sepulchral melodrame. Of all
The fools who flocked to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe,
There throbbed not there a thought which pierced the pall;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seemed the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.[3]

i. *He died and left his kingdom still behind*
Not much less mad—and certainly as blind.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [At the time of the king's death Byron expressed himself somewhat differently. "I see," he says (Letter to Murray, February 21, 1820), "the good old King is gone to his place; one can't help being sorry, though blindness, and age, and insanity are supposed to be drawbacks on human felicity."]

2. ["The display was most magnificent; the powerful light which threw all below into strong relief, reached but high enough to touch the pendent helmets and banners into faint colouring, and the roof was a vision of tarnished gleams and tissues among the Gothic tracery. The vault was still open, and the Royal coffin lay below, with the crowns of England and Hanover on cushions of purple and the broken wand crossing it. At the altar four Royal banners covered with golden emblems were strewed upon the ground, as if their office was completed; the altar was piled with consecrated gold plate, and the whole aspect of the Chapel was the deepest and most magnificent display of melancholy grandeur."—From a description of the funeral of George the Third (signed J. T.), in the *European Magazine*, February, 1820, vol. 77, p. 123.]

3. ["So by the unseen comforted, raised I my head in obedience,
And in a vault I found myself placed, arched over on all sides.

XI.

So mix his body with the dust! It might
  Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
  Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;
But the unnatural balsams merely blight
  What Nature made him at his birth, as bare
As the mere million's base unmummied clay—
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.[1]

XII.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done;
  He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
  For him, unless he left a German will:[2]

Narrow and low was that house of the dead. Around it were coffins,
Each in its niche, and palls, and urns, and funeral hatchments,
Velvets of Tyrian dye, retaining their hues unfaded;
Blazonry vivid still, as if fresh from the touch of the limner;
Nor was the golden fringe, nor the golden broidery, tarnished."
A Vision, etc., ii.

"On Thursday night, the 3rd inst. [February, 1820], the body being wrapped in an exterior fold of white satin, was placed in the inside coffin, which was composed of mahogany, pillowed and ornamented in the customary manner with white satin. . . . This was enclosed in a leaden coffin, again enclosed in another mahogany coffin, and the whole finally placed in the state coffin of Spanish mahogany, covered with the richest Genoa velvet of royal purple, a few shades deeper in tint than Garter blue. The lid was divided into three compartments by double rows of silver-gilt nails, and in the compartment at the head, over a rich star of the Order of the Garter was placed the Royal Arms of England, beautifully executed in dead Gold. . . . In the lower compartment at the feet was the British Lion *Rampant, regardant*, supporting a shield with the letters G.R. surrounded with the garter and motto of the same order in dead gold. . . . The handles were of silver, richly gilt of a massive modern pattern, and the most exquisite workmanship."—*Ibid.*, p. 126.]

1. ["The body of his Majesty was not embalmed in the usual manner, but has been wrapped in cere-clothes, to preserve it as long as possible. . . . The corpse, indeed, exhibited a painful spectacle of the rapid decay which had recently taken place in his Majesty's constitution, . . . and hence, possibly, the surgeons deemed it impossible to perform the process of embalming in the usual way."—*Ibid.*, p. 126.]

2. [The fact that George II. pocketed, and never afterwards produced or attempted to carry out his father's will, may have suggested to the scandalous the possibility of a similar act on the part of his great-grandson.]

But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,[i]
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII.

"God save the king!" It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:[1]
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of Hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damned
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we're crammed
With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
I know that all save England's Church have shammed,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damned* bad purchase.

XV.

God help us all! God help me too! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the Devil can wish,
And not a whit more difficult to damn,
Than is to bring to land a late-hooked fish,
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,
As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost every body born to die.

i. *In whom his* { *vices* / *virtues* } *all are reigning still.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Lady Byron's account of her husband's theological opinions is at variance with this statement. (See *Diary* of H. C. Robinson, 1869, iii. 436.)]

XVI.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys: when, lo! there came
A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—
A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a Saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start and then a wink,
Said, "There's another star gone out, I think!"[i]

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
A Cherub flapped his right wing o'er his eyes—
At which Saint Peter yawned, and rubbed his nose:
"Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee rise!"
Waving a goodly wing, which glowed, as glows
An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes:
To which the saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?
"Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

XVIII.

"No," quoth the Cherub: "George the Third is dead."
"And who *is* George the Third?" replied the apostle:
"*What George? what Third?*" "The King of England," said
The angel. "Well! he won't find kings to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
Because the last we saw here had a tustle,
And ne'er would have got into Heaven's good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was—if I remember—King of France;[1]
That head of his, which could not keep a crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:

i. *But he with first a start and then a nod.*—[*MS.*]
Snored, "There is some new star gone out by G—d!"—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Louis the Sixteenth was guillotined January 21, 1793.]

If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
I only knocked his head from out his hand.

XX.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the Saints came out and took him in;
And there he sits by Saint Paul, cheek by jowl;[i]
That fellow Paul—the parvenù! The skin[1]
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeemed his sin,
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

"But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
There would have been a different tale to tell:
The fellow-feeling in the Saint's beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell;
And so this very foolish head Heaven solders
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below."

XXII.

The Angel answered, "Peter! do not pout:
The King who comes has head and all entire,
And never knew much what it was about—
He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
My business and your own is not to inquire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
Which is to act as we are bid to do."

i. *That fellow Paul the damndest Saint.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. ["The blessed apostle Bartholomew preached first in Lycaonia, and, at the last, in Athens . . . and there he was first flayed, and afterwards his head was smitten off."—*Golden Legend*, edited by F. S. Ellis, 1900, v. 41.]

XXIII.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed), and midst them an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
Halted before the gate, and, in his shroud,
Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.[1]

XXIV.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host
A Spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tossed;
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be entered more by him or Sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He pottered[2] with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his Apostolic skin:[i]
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor.[ii]

i. —— *his whole celestial skin.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Or some such other superhuman ichor.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. ["Then I beheld the King. From a cloud which covered the pavement
His reverend form uprose: heavenward his face was directed.
Heavenward his eyes were raised, and heavenward his arms were directed."
The Vision, etc., iii.]

2. [The reading of the MS. and of the *Liberal* is "pottered." The editions of 1831, 1832, 1837, etc., read "pattered."]

XXVI.

The very Cherubs huddled all together,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And formed a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal Manes (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the Angels all are Tories).

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges
Reached even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's Sound."[i. 1]

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,[2]
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night

i. *By Captain Parry's crews* ——.—[*The Liberal*, 1822, i. 12.]

1. ["The luminous arch had broken into irregular masses, streaming with much rapidity in different directions, varying continually, in shape and interest, and extending themselves from north, by the east, to north. The usual pale light of the aurora strongly resembled that produced by the combustion of phosphorus; a very slight tinge of red was noticed when the aurora was most vivid, but no other colours were visible.'—*Sir E. Parry's Voyage in* 1819–20, p. 135.]

2. [Compare "Methought I saw a fair youth borne with prodigious speed through the heavens, who gave a blast to his trumpet so violent, that the radiant beauty of his countenance was in part disfigured by it."—Translation of Quevedo's "Dream of Skulls," by G. Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, 1888, ii. 340.]

Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote,[1] or Bob Southey raving.[2]

XXIX.

'Twas the Archangel Michael: all men know
The make of Angels and Archangels, since
There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the Angels' Prince.
There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
A goodly work of him from whom all Glory
And Good arise; the portal past—he stood;
Before him the young Cherubs and Saints hoary—
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
To state, they were not older than St. Peter,
But merely that they seemed a little sweeter).

XXXI.

The Cherubs and the Saints bowed down before
That arch-angelic Hierarch, the first
Of Essences angelical who wore
The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst

1. [Joanna Southcott, born 1750, published her *Book of Wonders*, 1813–14, died December 27, 1814.]

2. ["Eminent on a hill, there stood the Celestial City;
Beaming afar it shone; its towers and cupolas rising
High in the air serene, with the brightness of gold in the furnace,
Where on their breadth the splendour lay intense and quiescent.
Part with a fierier glow, and a short thick tremulous motion
Like the burning pyropus; and turrets and pinnacles sparkled,
Playing in jets of light, with a diamond-like glory coruscant."
The Vision, etc., iv.]

Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the Viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "Champ Clos" the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a-year or so;
And that the "Sons of God," like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,[1]
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic,
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

1. [See *The Book of Job* literally translated from the original Hebrew, by John Mason Good, F.R.S. (1764–1827), London, 1812. In the "Introductory Dissertation," the author upholds the biographical and historical character of the Book of Job against the contentions of Professor Michaelis (Johann David, 1717–1791). The notes abound in citations from the Hebrew and from the Arabic version.]

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of Heaven; like eastern thresholds is [1]
The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls despatched to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The Archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below [i.]
The heart in good men is supposed to tend;
He turned as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient friend [ii.]
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor Noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings, endued
With better sense and hearts, whom History mentions,
Who long have "paved Hell with their good intentions." [2]

i. *Crossing his radiant arms* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *But kindly; Sathan met* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. ["The gates or gateways of Eastern cities" were used as "places for public deliberation, administration of justice, or audience for kings and nations, or ambassadors." See *Deut.* xvi. 18, "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates . . . and they shall judge the people with just judgment." Hence came the use of the word "Porte" in speaking of the Government of Constantinople.—Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*, art. "Gate."]

2. ["No saint in the course of his religious warfare was more sensible of the unhappy failure of pious resolves than Dr. Johnson; he said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, 'Sir, hell is paved with

XXXVIII.

Michael began: "What wouldst thou with this man,
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will,
If it be just: if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not—let him have way."

XXXIX.

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air, "even here
Before the gate of Him thou servest, must
I claim my subject: and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
He reigned o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

"Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine;* it was,
Once, *more* thy master's: but I triumph not
In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas!
Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
In worship round him, he may have forgot
Yon weak creation of such paltry things:
I think few worth damnation save their kings,

XLI.

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as Lord: and even had
I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,

good intentions.'" Compare "Hell is full of good meanings and wishes." *Jacula Prudentum*, by George Herbert, ed. 1651, p. 11; Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1876, p. 450, *note* 5.]

That Hell has nothing better left to do
Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
And evil by their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,
And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of Ocean called him king: through many a storm
His isles had floated on the abyss of Time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.[1]

XLIII.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;[2]
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France.

XLIV.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed. From out the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amassed
Of Sin and Slaughter—from the Cæsars' school,

1. [Compare—

"Not once or twice in our rough Island's story
The path of duty has become the path of glory."
Tennyson's *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.*]

2. [John Stuart, Earl of Bute (1713–1792), was Secretary of State March 25, 1761, and Prime Minister May 29, 1762—April, 1763. For the general estimate of the influence which Bute exercised on the young king, see a caricature entitled "The Royal Dupe" Wright, p. 285), *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, art. "George III."]

Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
More drenched with gore, more cumbered with the slain.

XLV.

"He ever warred with freedom and the free:
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they uttered the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
History was ever stained as his will be
With national and individual woes?[i]
I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

XLVI.

"I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what Oppression chose.

XLVII.

"The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake
Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII.

"Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—[ii]
Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,

i. *With blood and debt* ——.—[*MS.*]
ii. *A* part *of that which they held all of old.*—[*MS. erased.*]

Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorred
The foe to Catholic participation [1]
In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX.

"True! he allowed them to pray God; but as
A consequence of prayer, refused the law
Which would have placed them upon the same base
With those who did not hold the Saints in awe."
But here Saint Peter started from his place
And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw:
Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,
While I am guard, may I be damned myself!

L.

"Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
Than see this royal Bedlam-bigot range [i]
The azure fields of Heaven, of that be sure!"
"Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
And if to this exchange you should be given,
I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to Heaven!"

LI.

Here Michael interposed: "Good Saint! and Devil!
Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:
Satan! excuse this warmth of his expression,

i. *Than see this blind old* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [George III. resisted Catholic Emancipation in 1795. "The more I reflect on the subject, the more I feel the danger of the proposal."—Letter to Pitt, February 6, 1795. Again, February 1, 1801, "This principle of duty must therefore prevent me from discussing any proposition [to admit 'Catholics and Dissenters to offices, and Catholics to Parliament'] tending to destroy the groundwork [that all who held employments in the State must be members of the Church of England] of our happy constitution." Finally, in 1807, he demanded of ministers "a positive assurance that they would never again propose to him any concession to the Catholics."—See *Life of Pitt*, by Earl Stanhope, 1879, ii. 434, 461; *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, art. "George III."]

And condescension to the vulgar's level: i.
Even Saints sometimes forget themselves in session
Have you got more to say?"—"No."—"If you please,
I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

LII.

Then Satan turned and waved his swarthy hand,
Which stirred with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand,
Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
In all the planets—and Hell's batteries
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.[1]

LIII.

This was a signal unto such damned souls
As have the privilege of their damnation
Extended far beyond the mere controls
Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
Is theirs particularly in the rolls
Of Hell assigned; but where their inclination
Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely—being damned the same.

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins;[2] or like to an "entré" ii.
Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.

i. *And interruption of your speech.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Stuck in their buttocks* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. ["Which into hollow engines long and round,
Thick-rammed at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate," etc.
Paradise Lost, vi. 484, *sq.*]

2. [A gold key is part of the insignia of office of the Lord Chamberlain and other court officials. In Plate 17 of Francis Sandford's *History of the Coronation of James the Second*, 1687, Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborow, who carries the sceptre of King Edward, is represented with a key hanging from his belt. He was First Groom of

I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.[i.]

LV.

When the great signal ran from Heaven to Hell—
About ten million times the distance reckoned
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
How much time it takes up, even to a second,
For every ray that travels to dispel
The fogs of London, through which, dimly beaconed,
The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe: [1]

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute;
I know the solar beams take up more time
Ere, packed up for their journey, they begin it; [ii.]
But then their Telegraph is less sublime,[2]
And if they ran a race, they would not win it
'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.
The sun takes up some years for every ray
To reach its goal—the Devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appeared

i. *For theirs are honours nobler far than these.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Before they make their journey, ere begin it.*—[*MS. erased.*]

the Stole and Gentleman of the Bedchamber. The Queen's Vice-chamberlain, who appears in another part of the procession, also carries a key.]

1. [It is possible that Byron was thinking of Horace Walpole's famous quip, "The summer has set in with its usual *severity*." But, of course, the meaning is that, owing to excessive and abnormal fogs, the *summer* gilding might have to be pretermitted.]

2. [For the invention of the electric telegraph before the date of this poem, see *Sir Francis Ronalds, F.R.S., and his Works in connection with Electric Telegraphy in* 1816, by J. Sime, 1893. But the "Telegraph" to which Byron refers was, probably, the semaphore (from London to Portsmouth), which, according to [Sir] John Barrow, the Secretary of the Admiralty, rendered "telegraphs of any kind now wholly unnecessary" (*vide ibid.*, p. 10).]

(I've seen a something like it in the skies
In the Ægean, ere a squall); it neared,
And, growing bigger, took another guise;
Like an aërial ship it tacked, and steered,[1]
Or *was* steered (I am doubtful of the grammar
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;

LVIII.

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud;
And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
But such a cloud! No land ere saw a crowd
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;[i.]
They shadowed with their myriads Space; their loud
And varied cries were like those of wild geese,[ii.]
(If nations may be likened to a goose),
And realised the phrase of "Hell broke loose."[2]

LIX.

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who damned away his eyes as heretofore:
There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—"What's your wull?"
The temperate Scot exclaimed: the French ghost swore
In certain terms I shan't translate in full,
As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war,[iii.]
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
"*Our* President is going to war, I guess."

LX.

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
In short, an universal shoal of shades

i. —— *No land was ever overflowed*
By locusts as the Heaven appeared by these.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *And many-languaged cries were like wild geese.*—[*Erased.*]
iii. *Though the first Hackney will* ——.—[*MS.*]

1. [Compare, for similarity of sound—
"It plunged and tacked and veered."
Ancient Mariner, pt. iii. line 156.]

2. [Compare—
"Wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose?"
Paradise Lost, iv. 917, 918.]

From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,[i]
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:[1]
All summoned by this grand "subpœna," to
Try if kings mayn't be damned like me or you.

LXI.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
As Angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
He turned all colours—as a peacock's tail,
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII.

Then he addressed himself to Satan: "Why—
My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
Our different parties make us fight so shy,
I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
Our difference is *political*, and I
Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you: and this
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

LXIII.

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of Earth and Hell produce;
'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,
True testimonies are enough: we lose
Our Time, nay, our Eternity, between
The accusation and defence: if we
Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality."

i. *Ready to swear the cause of all their pain.*—[*Erased.*]

1. [In the game of ombre the ace of spades, *spadille*, ranks as the best trump card, and *basto*, the ace of clubs, ranks as the third best trump card. (For a description of ombre, see Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, iii. 47–64.)]

LXIV.

Satan replied, "To me the matter is
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him; I've kings enough below, God knows!"

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon (late called "multifaced"[1]
By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be?" Then Satan answered, "There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any."

LXVI.

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking Sprite[2]
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Dressed in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long

1. ["'Caitiffs, are ye dumb?' cried the multifaced Demon in anger."
Vision of Judgement, v.]

2. ["Beholding the foremost,
Him by the cast of his eye oblique, I knew as the firebrand
Whom the unthinking populace held for their idol and hero,
Lord of Misrule in his day."
Ibid., v.

In Hogarth's caricature (the original pen-and-ink sketch is in the "Rowfant Library:" see Cruikshank's frontispiece to *Catalogue*, 1886) Wilkes squints *more* than "a gentleman should squint." The costume —long coat, waistcoat buttoned to the neck, knee-breeches, and stockings—is not unpleasing, but the expression of the face is something between a leer and a sneer. Walpole (*Letters*, 1858, vii. 274) describes another portrait (by Zoffani) as "a delightful piece of Wilkes looking —no, squinting tenderly at his daughter. It is a caricature of the Devil acknowledging Miss Sin in Milton."]

By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.[1]

LXVII.

The Spirit looked around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaimed, "My friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
So let's to business: why this general call?
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturned coat![i.]
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

LXVIII.

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake; these things
Are of a former life, and what we do
Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met: so now you know."
"Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,"[ii.]
Said Wilkes, "are Cherubs; and that soul below
Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind
A good deal older—bless me! is he blind?"

LXIX.

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
Depends upon his deeds," the Angel said;
"If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
Gives license to the humblest beggar's head
To lift itself against the loftiest."—"Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead,
For such a liberty—and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

i. *It shall be me they'll find the trustiest patriot.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Said Wilkes I've done as much before.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [For the "Coan" skirts of the First Empire, see the fashion plates and Gillray's and Rowlandson's caricatures *passim.*]

LXX.

"*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him," said the Archangel. "Why,"
Replied the spirit, "since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,[1]
With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton,[2] and shall be unwilling
To see him punished here for their excess,
Since they were both damned long ago, and still in

1. [On his third return to Parliament for Middlesex, October 8, 1774, Wilkes took his seat (December 2) without opposition. In the following February, and on subsequent occasions, he endeavoured to induce the House to rescind the resolutions passed January 19, 1764, under which he had been expelled from Parliament, and named as blasphemous, obscene, etc. Finally, May, 1782, he obtained a substantial majority on a division, and the obnoxious resolutions were ordered to be expunged from the journals of the House.]

2. [Bute, as leader of the king's party, was an open enemy; Grafton, a half-hearted friend. The duke (1736–1811) would have visited him in the Tower (1763), "to hear from himself his own story and his defence;" but rejected an appeal which Wilkes addressed to him (May 3) to become surety for bail. He feared that such a step might "come under the denomination of an insult on the Crown." A writ of *Habeas Corpus* (see line 8) was applied for by Lord Temple and others, and, May 6, Wilkes was discharged by Lord Chief Justice Pratt, on the ground of privilege. Three years later (November 1, 1766), on his return from Italy, Wilkes sought to obtain Grafton's protection and interest; but the duke, though he consulted Chatham, and laid Wilkes's letter before the King, decided to "take no notice" of this second appeal. In his *Autobiography* Grafton is careful to define "the extent of his knowledge" of Mr. Wilkes, and to explain that he was not "one of his intimates"—a *caveat* which warrants the statement of Junius that "as for Mr. Wilkes, it is, perhaps, the greatest misfortune of his life, that you should have so many compensations to make in the closet for your former friendship with him. Your gracious Master understands your character; and makes you a persecutor because you have been a friend" ("Letter (xii.) to the Duke of Grafton," May 30, 1769).—*Memoirs of Augustus Henry, Third Duke of Grafton*, by Sir W. Anson, Bart., D.C.L., 1898, pp. 190–197.]

Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,
And vote his *habeas corpus* into Heaven."

LXXII.

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand all this;
You turned to half a courtier[1] ere you died,
And seem to think it would not be amiss
To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour,
For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you in your jesting way,
Flitting and whispering round about the spit
Where Belial, upon duty for the day,[i]
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
That fellow even in Hell breeds farther ills;
I'll have him *gagged*—'twas one of his own Bills.[2]

i. *Where Beelzebub upon duty* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [In 1774 Wilkes was elected Lord Mayor, and in the following spring it fell to his lot to present to the King a remonstrance from the Livery against the continuance of the war with America. Walpole (April 17, 1775, *Letters*, 1803, vi. 257) says that "he used his triumph with moderation—in modern language with good breeding." The King is said to have been agreeably surprised at his demeanour. In his old age (1790) he voted against the Whigs. A pasquinade, written by Sheridan, Tickell, and Lord John Townshend, anticipated the devil's insinuations—

"Johnny Wilkes, Johnny Wilkes,
Thou greatest of bilks,
How changed are the notes you now sing!
Your famed 'Forty-five'
Is prerogative,
And your blasphemy 'God save the King'!
Johnny Wilkes,
And your blasphemy, 'God save the King'!"

Wilkes, Sheridan, Fox, by W. F. Rae, 1874, pp. 132, 133.]

2. ["In consequence of Kyd Wake's attack upon the King, two Acts were introduced [the "Treason" and "Sedition Bills," November 6,

LXXIV.

"Call Junius!" From the crowd a shadow stalked,[1]
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walked
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all rammed, and jammed (but to be balked,
As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compressed and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human colic, which is sadder.[i.]

LXXV.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, grey-haired figure,
That looked as it had been a shade on earth;[ii.]
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth;
Now it waxed little, then again grew bigger,[iii.]
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

i. *Or in the human cholic* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *Which looked as 'twere a phantom even on earth.*—[*MS. erased.*]
iii. *Now it seemed little, now a little bigger.*—[*MS. erased.*]

November 10, 1795], called the Pitt and Grenville Acts, for better securing the King's person" (*Diary of H. C. Robinson*, 1869, i. 32). "The first of these bills [*The Plot Discovered, etc.*, by S. T. Coleridge, November 28, 1795, *Essays on his own Times*, 1850, i. 56] is an attempt to assassinate the liberty of the press; the second to smother the liberty of speech." The "Devil" feared that Wilkes had been "gagged" for good and all.]

1. ["Who might the other be, his comrade in guilt and in suffering,
Brought to the proof like him, and shrinking like him from the trial?
Nameless the Libeller lived, and shot his arrows in darkness;
Undetected he passed to the grave, and leaving behind him
Noxious works on earth, and the pest of an evil example,
Went to the world beyond, where no offences are hidden.
Masked had he been in his life, and now a visor of iron,
Rivetted round his head, had abolished his features for ever.
Speechless the slanderer stood, and turned his face from the Monarch,
Iron-bound as it was . . . so insupportably dreadful
Soon or late to conscious guilt is the eye of the injured."
Vision of Judgement, v.]

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The Devil himself seemed puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;
And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father; upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife;[1] but the wight[i]
Mysterious changed his countenance at least
As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
And when that change was hardly well put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own mother

i. *A doctor, a man-midwife* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [The Letters of Junius have been attributed to more than fifty authors. Among the more famous are the Duke of Portland, Lord George Sackville, Sir Philip Francis, Edmund Burke, John Dunning, Lord Ashburton, John Horne Tooke, Hugh Boyd, George Chalmers, etc. Of Junius, Byron wrote, in his *Journal* of November 23, 1813, "I don't know what to think. Why should Junius be yet dead? . . . the man must be alive, and will never die without the disclosure" (*Letters*, 1893, ii. 334); but an article (by Brougham) in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xxix. p. 94, on *The Identity of Junius with a Distinguished Living Character established* (see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 210), seems to have almost persuaded him that "Francis is Junius." (For a *résumé* of the arguments in favour of the identity of Junius with Francis, see Mr. Leslie Stephen's article in the *Dict. of Nat. Biography*, art. "Francis." See, too, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, by W. E. H. Lecky, 1887, iii. 233–255. For a series of articles (by W. Fraser Rae) against this theory, see *Athenæum*, 1888, ii. 192, 258, 319. The question is still being debated. See *The Francis Letters*, with a note on the Junius Controversy, by C. F. Keary, 1901.)]

(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other;
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,[i]
At this epistolary "Iron Mask." [1]

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
"Three gentlemen at once" [2] (as sagely says
Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might deem
That he was not even *one;* now many rays
Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

LXXX.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer,
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call,[ii]
Was *really—truly*—nobody at all.

i. *Till curiosity became a task.*—[*MS. erased.*]
ii. *It is that he* ——.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [The "Man in the Iron Mask," or, more correctly, the "Man in the Black Velvet Mask," has been identified with Count Ercole Antonio Mattioli, Secretary of State at the Court of Ferdinando Carlo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. Mattioli was convicted of high treason, and at the instance of Louis XIV. was seized by the Maréchal Catinat, May 2, 1679, and confined at Pinerolo. He was deported to the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, March 19, 1694, and afterwards transferred to the Bastille, September 18, 1698. He died November 19, 1703. Baron Heiss was the first to solve the mystery. Chambrier, Roux-Fazillac, Delort, G. A. Ellis (see a notice in the *Quart. Rev.*, June, 1826, vol. xxxiv. p. 19), and others take the same view. (See, for confirmation of this theory, an article *L'Homme au Masque de Velours Noir*, in the *Revue Historique*, by M. Frantz Funck-Brentano, November, December, 1894, tom. 56, pp. 253-303.)]

2. [See *The Rivals*, act iv. sc. 11.]

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
Written without hands, since we daily view
Them written without heads; and books, we see,
Are filled as well without the latter too:
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth,[1] will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
"For *that* you may consult my title-page,"[2]
Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
"If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now."—"Canst thou upbraid,"
Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
Aught further?" Junius answered, "You had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

LXXXIII.

"My charges upon record will outlast[i]
The brass of both his epitaph and tomb."
"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of some past
Exaggeration? something which may doom
Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou wast
Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom
Of passion?"—"Passion!" cried the phantom dim,
"I loved my country, and I hated him.

i. *My charge is upon record and will last*
Longer than will his lamentation.—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [The Delta of the Niger is a vast alluvial morass, covered with dense forests of mangrove. "Along the whole coast . . . there opens into the Atlantic its successive estuaries, which navigators have scarcely been able to number."]

2. [The title-page runs thus: "*Letters of Junius, Stat Nominis Umbra.*" *That*, and nothing more! On the title-page of his copy, across the motto, S. T. Coleridge wrote this sentence, "As he never dropped the mask, so he too often used the poisoned dagger of the assassin."—*Miscellanies, etc.*, by S. T. Coleridge, ed. T. Ashe, 1885, p. 341.]

LXXXIV.

"What I have written, I have written: let
The rest be on his head or mine!" So spoke
Old "*Nominis Umbra;*" and while speaking yet,
Away he melted in celestial smoke.
Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't forget
To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,
And Franklin;"[1]—but at this time there was heard
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirred.

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
Of Cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus[2] to the circle made
His way, and looked as if his journey cost
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
"What's this?" cried Michael; "why, 'tis not a ghost?"
"I know it," quoth the Incubus; "but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

"Confound the renegado![3] I have sprained
My left wing, he's so heavy;[4] one would think

1. [John Horne Tooke (1736–1812), as an opponent of the American War, and as a promoter of the Corresponding Society, etc.; and Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), as the champion of American Independence, would have been cited as witnesses against George III.]

2. [In the *Diable Boiteux* (1707) of Le Sage, Don Cleofas, clinging to the cloak of Asmodeus, is carried through the air to the summit of San Salvador. Compare—

"Oh! could Le Sage's demon's gift
Be realiz'd at my desire,
This night my trembling form he'd lift,
To place it on St. Mary's spire."
Granta, a Medley, stanza 1.,
Poetical Works, 1898, i. 56, *note* 2.]

3. ["But what he most detested, what most filled him with disgust, was the settled, determined malignity of a renegado."—*Speech of William Smith, M.P., in the House of Commons*, March 14, 1817. (See, too, for the use of the word "renegado," *Poetical Works*, 1900, iii. 488, *note* 1.)]

4. [For the "weight" of Southey's quartos, compare Byron's *note* (1)

Some of his works about his neck were chained.
But to the point; while hovering o'er the brink
Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rained),
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—[1]
No less on History—than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII.

"The former is the Devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael: so the affair
Belongs to all of us, you understand.
I snatched him up just as you see him there,
And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."[1]

LXXXVIII.

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear:
We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."
"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates

1. *And drawing nigh I caught him at a libel.*—[*MS. erased.*]

to *Hints from Horace*, line 657, and a variant of lines 753–756. "Thus let thy ponderous quarto steep and stink" (*Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 435, 443).]

1. [Compare—

"But for the children of the 'Mighty Mother's,'
The would-be wits, and can't-be gentlemen,
I leave them to their daily 'tea is ready,'
Smug coterie, and literary lady."

Beppo, stanza lxxvi. lines 5–8, *vide ante*, p. 183.]

The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.[1]
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass [1] as this, like Balaam's, prates?"
"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say:
You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;[2]
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavined dactyls could be spurred
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both Cherubim and Seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his foundered verses under way,
And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best—[3]
'*Non Di, non homines*'—you know the rest."[4]

1. *And scrawls as though he were head clerk to the "Fates,"*
And this I think is quite enough for one.—[*Erased.*]

1. [Compare—

"One leaf from Southey's laurels may explode
All his combustibles,
'An ass, by God!'"
A Satire on Satirists, etc., by W. S. Landor, 1836, p. 22.]

2. ["There is a chaunt in the recitation both of Coleridge and Wordsworth, which acts as a spell upon the hearers."—Hazlitt's *My First Acquaintance with Poets; The Liberal*, 1823, ii. 23, 46.]

3. [Compare the attitude of Minos to the "poet" in Fielding's *Journey from This World to the Next:* "The poet answered, he believed if Minos had read his works he would set a higher value on them. [The poet had begged for admittance to Elysium on the score of

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
Which seemed to hold all verse in detestation;
The Angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
Before, to profit by a new occasion:
The Monarch, mute till then, exclaimed, "What! what![5]
Pye[6] come again? No more—no more of that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean—the *slaves hear now*); some cried "Off, off!"
As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
The Bard Saint Peter prayed to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

his 'dramatic works.' Minos dismissed the plea, but relented on being informed that he had once lent the whole profits of a benefit-night to a friend.] He was then beginning to repeat, but Minos pushed him forward, and turning his back to him, applied himself to the next passengers."—*Novelist's Magazine*, 1783, vol. xii. cap. vii. p. 17.]

4. ["... Mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines, non dî, non concessere columnæ."
Horace, *Ep. Ad Pisones*, lines 372, 373.]

5. [For the King's habit of duplicating his phrases, compare—

"Whitbread, is't true? I hear, I hear
You're of an ancient family renowned.
What? what? I'm told that you're a limb
Of Pym, the famous fellow Pym:
What, Whitbread, is it true what people say?
Son of a Roundhead are you? hæ? hæ? hæ?
. . . . . .
Thirtieth of January don't you *feed*?
Yes, yes, you eat Calf's head, you eat Calf's head."
Instructions to a Celebrated Laureat,
Peter Pindar's *Works*, 1812, i. 493.

6. [For Henry James Pye (1745-1813), see *English Bards, etc.*, line 102, *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 305, *note* 1.]

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favoured knave;[1.1]
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

XCV.

Then Michael blew his trump, and stilled the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,
Which now and then will make a slight inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrowed;
And now the Bard could plead his own bad cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
Of which he buttered both sides; 'twould delay
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),
And take up rather more time than a day,

i. —— *an ill-looking knave.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. ["Yesterday, at Holland House, I was introduced to Southey—the best-looking bard I have seen for some time. To have that poet's head and shoulders, I would almost have written his Sapphics. He is certainly a prepossessing person to look on, and a man of talent, and all that, and—*there* is his eulogy."—Letter to Moore, September 27, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 266.

"I have not seen the *Liberal*," wrote Southey to Wynn, October 26, 1822, "but a Leeds paper has been sent me . . . including among its extracts the description and behaviour of a certain 'varlet.' He has not offended me in the way that the pious painter exasperated the Devil" (*i.e.* by painting him "more ugly than ever:" see Southey's Ballad of the *Pious Painter*, *Works*, 1838, vi. 64).]

To name his works—he would but cite a few—[i.]
"Wat Tyler"—"Rhymes on Blenheim"—"Waterloo."[1]

XCVII.

He had written praises of a Regicide;[2]
He had written praises of all kings whatever;
He had written for republics far and wide,
And then against them bitterer than ever;
For pantisocracy he once had cried[3]
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
Had turned his coat—and would have turned his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had called

i. *He therefore was content to cite a few.*—[*MS. erased.*]

1. [Southey's "Battle of Blenheim" was published in the *Annual Anthology* of 1800, pp. 34–37. It is quoted at length, as a republican and seditious poem, in the *Preface* to an edition of *Wat Tyler*, published by W. Hone in 1817; and it is also included in an "Appendix" entitled *The Stripling Bard, or the Apostate Laureate*, affixed to another edition issued in the same year by John Fairburn. The purport and *motif* of these excellent rhymes is non-patriotic if not Jacobinical, but, for some reason, the poem has been considered improving for the young, and is included in many "Poetry Books" for schools. *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* was published in 1816, not long before the resuscitation of *Wat Tyler*.]

2. [*Vide ante*, p. 482.]

3. ["He has written *Wat Tyler*, and taken the office of poet laureate—he has, in the *Life of Henry Kirke White* (see Byron's note *infra*), denominated reviewing 'the ungentle craft,' and has become a reviewer—he was one of the projectors of a scheme called 'pantisocracy,' for having all things, including women, in common (*query* common women?)."—*Some Observations upon an Article in Blackwood's Magazine* (No. xxix., August, 1819), *Letters*, 1900 [Appendix IX.], iv. 483. The invention or, possibly, disinterment of this calumny was no doubt a counterblast on Byron's part to the supposed charge of a "league of incest" (at Diodati, in 1816), which he maintained had been disseminated by Coleridge on the authority of Southey (*vide ante*, p. 475). It is, perhaps, unnecessary to state that before Pantisocracy was imagined or devised, one of the future pantisocrats, Robert Lovell, was married to Mary Fricker; that Robert Southey was engaged to be married to her sister Edith; and that, as a result of the birth and evolution of the scheme, Coleridge became engaged to be married to a third sister, Sarah, hitherto loverless, in order that "every Jack should have his Jill," and the world begin anew in a second Eden across the seas. All things were to be held in common, in order that each man might hold his wife in particular.]

Reviewing "the ungentle craft," and then [1]
Became as base a critic as e'er crawled—
Fed, paid, and pampered by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been mauled:
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
And more of both than any body knows.

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's [2] life:—here turning round
To Satan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

Satan bowed, and was silent. "Well, if you,
With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be rendered more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work; [3] not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown."[i]

CI.

"But talking about trumpets, here's my 'Vision!'
Now you shall judge, all people—yes—you shall

i. *Is not unlike it, and is* ——.—[*MS.*]

1. *Remains of Henry Kirke White* [1808, i. 23].

2. [Southey's *Life of Wesley, and Rise and Progress of Methodism*, in two volumes octavo, was published in 1820. In a "Memento" written in a blank leaf of the first volume, Coleridge expressed his desire that his copy should be given to Southey as a bequest. "One or other volume," he writes, "was more often in my hands than any other in my ragged book-regiment. . . . How many an hour of self-oblivion do I owe to this Life of Wesley!"—Third ed. 1846, i. xv.]

3. [In his reply to the Preface to Southey's *Vision of Judgement*, Byron attacked the Laureate as "this arrogant scribbler of all works."]

Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall.
I settle all these things by intuition,
Times present, past, to come—Heaven—Hell—and all,
Like King Alfonso.[1] When I thus see double,
I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
Persuasion on the part of Devils, Saints,
Or Angels, now could stop the torrent; so
He read the first three lines of the contents;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
Had vanished, with variety of scents,

1. King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that "had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities." [Alfonso X., King of Castile (1221–1284), surnamed the Wise and the Astronomer, "gave no small encouragement to the Jewish rabbis." Under his patronage Judah de Toledo translated the works of Avicenna, and improved them by a new division of the stars. Moreover, "he sent for about 50 learned men from Gascony, Paris, and other places, to translate the tables of Ptolemy, and to compile a more correct set of them (*i.e.* the famous *Tabulæ Alphonsinæ*). . . . The king himself presided over the assembly."—*Mod. Univ. Hist.*, xiii. 304, 305, *note* (U).

Alfonso has left behind him the reputation of a Castilian Hamlet—"infinite in faculty," but "unpregnant of his cause." "He was more fit," says Mariana (*Hist.*, lib. xiii. c. 20), "for letters than for the government of his subjects; he studied the heavens and watched the stars, but forgot the earth and lost his kingdom." Nevertheless his works do follow him. "He is to be remembered for his poetry ('*Cántigas*,' chants in honour of the Virgin, and '*Tesoro*,' a treatise on the philosopher's stone), for his astronomical tables, which all the progress of science have not deprived of their value, and for his great work on legislation, which is at this moment an authority in both hemispheres."—*Hist. of Spanish Literature*, by G. Ticknor, 1888, i. 7.

Byron got the quip about Alfonso and "the absurdities of creation" from Bayle (*Dict.*, 1735, art. "Castile"), who devotes a long note (H) to a somewhat mischievous apology for the king's apparent profanity. Bayle's immediate authority is Le Bovier de Fontenelle, in his *Entretiens sur la Pluralité des Mondes*, 1686, p. 38, "L'embaras de tous ces cercles estoit si grand, que dans un temps où l'on ne connoissoit encore rien de meilleur, un roy d'Aragon (*sic*) grand mathematicien mais apparemment peu devot, disoit que si Dieu l'eust appellé à son conseil quand il fit le Monde, il luy eust donné de bons avis."]

Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his "melodious twang." [1]

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;
The Angels stopped their ears and plied their pinions;
The Devils ran howling, deafened, down to Hell;
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—
(For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
And I leave every man to his opinions);
Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo!
His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
And at the fifth line knocked the poet down; [2]
Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
Into his lake, for there he did not drown;
A different web being by the Destinies
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,
But soon rose to the surface—like himself;

1. [See Aubrey's account (*Miscellanies upon Various Subjects*, by John Aubrey, F.R.S., 1857, p. 81) of the apparition which disappeared "with a curious perfume, and *most melodious twang;*" or see Scott's *Antiquary, The Novels, etc.*, 1851, i. 375.]

2. ["When I beheld them meet, the desire of my soul o'ercame me,
—— I, too, pressed forward to enter—
But the weight of the body withheld me.—I stooped to the fountain,
. . . . . .
And my feet methought sunk, and I fell precipitate. Starting,
Then I awoke, and beheld the mountains in twilight before me,
Dark and distinct; and instead of the rapturous sound of hosannahs,
Heard the bell from the tower, TOLL! TOLL! through the silence of evening."
Vision of Judgement, xii.]

For all corrupted things are buoyed like corks,[1]
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"[i]
As Welborn says—"the Devil turned precisian."[2]

CVI.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone[ii]
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And showed me what I in my turn have shown;
All I saw farther, in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipped into Heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.[3]

i. *In his own little nook* ——.—[*MS.*]
ii. —— *the light is now withdrawn.*—[*MS.*]
R[a] Oct. 4, 1821.

1. A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know. [Byron may, possibly, have heard of the "Floating Island" on Derwentwater."]

2. ["Verily, you brache!
The devil turned precisian."
Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, act i. sc. 1.]

3. ["Mem. This poem was begun on May 7, 1821, but left off the same day—resumed about the 20th of September of the same year, and concluded as dated."]

POEMS 1816—1823.

POEMS 1816—1823.

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD[1] ON THE SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA.[2]

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purport.[3]

I.

THE Moorish King rides up and down,
Through Granada's royal town:

1. [Byron does not give his authority for the Spanish original of his *Romance Muy Doloroso.* In default of any definite information, it may be surmised that his fancy was caught by some broadside or chap-book which chanced to come into his possession, and that he made his translation without troubling himself about the origin or composition of the ballad. As it stands, the "Romance" is a cento of three or more ballads which are included in the *Guerras Civiles de Granada* of Gines Perez de Hita, published at Saragossa in 1595 (see ed. "En Alcala de Henares," 1601, pp. 249–252). Stanzas 1–11, "Passeavase el Rey Moro," etc., follow the text which De Hita gives as a translation from the Arabic; stanzas 12–14 are additional, and do not correspond with any of the Spanish originals; stanzas 15–21, with numerous deviations and omissions, follow the text of a second ballad, "Moro Alcayde, Moro Alcayde," described by De Hita as "antiguo Romance," and portions of stanzas 21–23 are imbedded in a ballad entitled "Muerte dada á Los Abencerrajes" (Duran's *Romancero General*, 1851, ii. 89).

The ballad as a whole was not known to students of Spanish literature previous to the publication of Byron's translation (1818), (see *Ancient Ballads from the Civil Wars of Granada*, by Thomas Rodd, 1801, pp. 93, 98; Southey's *Common-Place Book*, iv. 262–266, and his *Chronicle of the Cid*, 1808, pp. 371–374), and it has not been included by H. Duran in his *Romancero General*, 1851, ii. 89–91, or by F. Wolf and C. Hofmann in their *Primavera y Flor de Romances*, 1856, i. 270–278. At the same time, it is most improbable that Byron was his own "Centonista," and it may be assumed that the Spanish text as printed (see *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., 1818, pp. 240–254, and *Poetical Works*,

From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama![1, 4]

2.

Letters to the Monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell:
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

3.

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

1. *Alas—alas—Alhama!*—[*MS. M.*]

1891, pp. 566, 567) was in his possession or within his reach. (For a correspondence on the subject, see *Notes and Queries*, Third Series, vol. xii. p. 391, and Fourth Series, vol. i. p. 162.)

A MS. of the Spanish text, sent to England for "copy," is in a foreign handwriting. Two MSS. (A, B) of the translation are in Mr. Murray's possession: A, a rough draft; B, a fair copy. The watermark of A is 1808, of B (dated January 4, 1817) 1800. It is to be noted that the refrain in the Spanish text is *Ay de mi Alhama*, and that the insertion of the comma is a printer's or reader's error.]

2. [In A.D. 886, during the reign of Muley Abul Hacen, King of Granada, Alhama was surprised and occupied by the Christians under Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon.]

3. The effect of the original ballad—which existed both in Spanish and Arabic—was such, that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada. ["This ballad was so dolorous in the original Arabic language, that every time it was sung it acted as an incitement to grief and despair, and for this reason it was at length finally prohibited in Granada."—*Historia . . . de las Guerras Civiles*, translated from the Arabic of Abenhamim, by Ginès Perez de Hita, and from the Spanish by Thomas Rodd, 1803, p. 334. According to Ticknor (*Hist. of Spanish Literature*, 1888, iii. 139), the "Arabic origin" of De Hita's work is not at all probable. "He may have obtained Arabic materials for parts of his story."]

4. [Byron's *Ay de mi, Alhama*, which should be printed *Ay de mi Alhama*, must be rendered "Woe for my Alhama!" "Woe is me, Alhama!" is the equivalent of "*Ay de mi Alhama!*"]

4.

When the Alhambra walls he gained,
On the moment he ordained
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

5.

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain.
Woe is me, Alhama!

6.

Then the Moors, by this aware,
That bloody Mars recalled them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

7.

Out then spake an agéd Moor
In these words the king before,
"Wherefore call on us, oh King?
What may mean this gathering?"
Woe is me, Alhama!

8.

"Friends! ye have, alas! to know
Of a most disastrous blow—
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtained Alhama's hold."
Woe is me, Alhama!

9.

Out then spake old Alfaqui,[1]
With his beard so white to see,

1. ["Un viejo Alfaqui" is "an old Alfaqui," *i.e.* a doctor of the Mussulman law, not a proper name.]

"Good King! thou art justly served,
Good King! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

10.

"By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee,
Of Cordova the Chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

11.

"And for this, oh King! is sent
On thee a double chastisement;
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

12.

"He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Granada must be won,
And thyself with her undone."
Woe is me, Alhama!

13.

Fire flashed from out the old Moor's eyes,
The Monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answered, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.[1]
Woe is me, Alhama!

14.

"There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings:"—

1. ["De leyes tambien hablava" should be rendered "He spake 'also' of the laws," not *tan bien*, "so well," or "exceeding well."]

Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish King, and doomed him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

15.

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui![1]
Though thy beard so hoary be,[i.]
The King hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama!

16.

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

17.

"Cavalier, and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth;
Let the Moorish Monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe.
Woe is me, Alhama!

18.

"But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys;
And if the King his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama!

19.

"Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives!

i. —— *so white to see.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. [The Alcaide or "governor" of the original ballad is converted into the Alfaqui of stanza 9. It was the "Alcaide," in whose absence Alhama was taken, and who lost children, wife, honour, and his own head in consequence (*Notes and Queries*, iv. i. 162).]

One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth, or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

20.

"I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day."
Woe is me, Alhama!

21.

And as these things the old Moor said,
They severed from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'Twas carried, as the King decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

22.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama!

23.

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls;
The King weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!

[First published, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., 1818.]

SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.[1]

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata: e diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambe chiedeo.

La mia fu tolta da veloce morte
A le fumanti tede d' Imeneo:
La tua, Francesco, in suggellate porte
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.

Ma tu almeno potrai dalla gelosa
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde,
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.

Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onde,
Corro a quel marmo, in cui la figlia or posa:
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

[*Opere Edite e Postume* di J. Vittorelli, Bassano, 1841, p. 294.]

TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,

1. [Jacopo Vittorelli (1749–1835) was born at Bassano, in Venetian territory. Under the Napoleonic "kingdom of Italy" he held office as a subordinate in the Ministry of Education at Milan, and was elected a member of the college of "Dotti." At a later period of his life he returned to Bassano, and received an appointment as censor of the press.

Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.

Mine, while the torch of Hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguished,—soon—too soon expires;
But thine, within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.

But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:

I to the marble, where *my* daughter lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but none replies.

[First published, *Childe Harold*, Canto IV., 1818.]

ON THE BUST OF HELEN BY CANOVA.[1]

In this belovéd marble view
Above the works and thoughts of Man,
What Nature *could* but *would not* do,
And Beauty and Canova *can!*
Beyond Imagination's power,
Beyond the Bard's defeated art,
With Immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the heart.

November 25, 1816.
[First published, *Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 61.]

His poetry, which is sweet and musical, but lacking in force and substance, recalls and embodies the style and spirit of the dying literature of the eighteenth century. "He lived and died," says Luigi Carrer, "the poet of Irene and Dori," unmoved by the hopes and fears, the storms and passions, of national change and development.—See *Manuale della Letteratura Italiana*, by A. d'Ancona and O. Bacci, 1894, iv. 585.]

1. ["The Helen of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi, whom I know) is without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution."—Letter to Murray, November 25, 1816. In the works of Antonio Canova, engraved in outline by Henry Moses (London, 1873), the bust of Helen is figured (to face p. 58), and it is stated that it was executed in 1814, and presented to the Countess Albrizzi. (See *Letters*, 1900, iv 14, 15, *note.*)]

VENICE. A FRAGMENT.[1]

'Tis midnight—but it is not dark
Within thy spacious place, St. Mark!
The Lights within, the Lamps without,
Shine above the revel rout.
The brazen Steeds are glittering o'er
The holy building's massy door,
Glittering with their collars of gold,
The goodly work of the days of old—
And the wingéd Lion stern and solemn
Frowns from the height of his hoary column,
Facing the palace in which doth lodge
The ocean-city's dreaded Doge.
The palace is proud—but near it lies,
Divided by the "Bridge of Sighs,"
The dreary dwelling where the State
Enchains the captives of their hate:
These—they perish or they pine;
But which their doom may none divine:
Many have passed that Arch of pain,
But none retraced their steps again.

It is a princely colonnade!
And wrought around a princely place,
When that vast edifice displayed
Looks with its venerable face
Over the far and subject sea,
Which makes the fearless isles so free!
And 'tis a strange and noble pile,
Pillared into many an aisle:
Every pillar fair to see,
Marble—jasper—and porphyry—
The Church of St. Mark—which stands hard by
With fretted pinnacles on high,
And Cupola and minaret;
More like the mosque of orient lands,
Than the fanes wherein we pray,
And Mary's blesséd likeness stands.—

Venice, *December* 6, 1816.

1. [From an autograph MS. in the possession of Mr. Murray, now for the first time printed.]

SO WE'LL GO NO MORE A-ROVING.[1]

1.

So we'll go no more a-roving
  So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
  And the moon be still as bright.

2.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
  And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
  And Love itself have rest.

3.

Though the night was made for loving,
  And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a-roving
  By the light of the moon.

Feb. 28, 1817.

[First published, *Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 79.]

[LORD BYRON'S VERSES ON SAM ROGERS.][2]

QUESTION.

Nose and Chin that make a knocker,[1]
Wrinkles that would puzzle Cocker;

1. —— *would shame a knocker.*—[*Fraser's Magazine*, 1833.]

1. ["The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, etc., etc.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find 'the sword wearing out the scabbard,' though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine."—Letter to Moore, February 28, 1817. The verses form part of the letter. (See *Letters*, 1900, iv. 59, 60.)]

2. [Lady Blessington told Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, 1869, iii. 17) that the publication of the *Question and Answer* would "kill Rogers." The

Mouth that marks the envious Scorner,
With a Scorpion in each corner
Curling up his tail to sting you,[1]
In the place that most may wring you;
Eyes of lead-like hue and gummy,
Carcase stolen from some mummy,
Bowels—(but they were forgotten,
Save the Liver, and that's rotten),

1. *Turning its quick tail* ——.—[*Fraser's, etc.*]

MS. is dated 1818, and it is probable that the lines were written in the early spring of that year. Moore or Murray had told Byron that Rogers was in doubt whether to praise or blame him in his poem on "Human Life" now approaching completion; and he had heard, from other sources, that it was Rogers who was the author or retailer of certain scandalous stories which were current in the "whispering-gallery of the world." He had reason to believe that everybody was talking about him, and it was a relief to be able to catch and punish so eminent a scandal-monger. It was in this spirit that he wrote to Murray (February 20, 1818), "What you tell me of Rogers . . . is like him. He cannot say that I have not been a sincere and warm friend to him, till the black drop of his liver oozed through too palpably to be overlooked. Now if I once catch him at any of his jugglery with me or mine, let him look to it," etc., etc., and in all probability the "poem on Rogers" was then in existence, or was working in his brain. The lines once written, Byron swallowed his venom, and, when Rogers visited Italy in the autumn of 1821, he met him at Bologna, travelled with him across the Apennines to Florence, and invited him "to stay as long as he liked" at Pisa. Thither Rogers came, presumably, in November, 1821, and, if we may trust the *Table Talk* (1856, p. 238), remained at the Palazzo Lanfranchi for several days.

Byron seems to have been more than usually provocative and cross-grained, and, on one occasion (see Medwin, *Angler in Wales*, 1834, i. 26, *sq.*; and *Records of Shelley, etc.*, by E. T. Trelawney, 1878, i. 53), when he was playing billiards, and Rogers was in the lobby outside, secretly incited his bull-dog, "Faithful Moretto," to bark and show his teeth; and, when Medwin had convoyed the terror-stricken bard into his presence, greeted him with effusion, but contrived that he should sit down on the very sofa which hid from view the MS. of "Question and Answer." *Longa est injuria, longæ ambages;* but the story rests on the evidence of independent witnesses.

By far the best comment on satire and satirist is to be found in the noble lines in *Italy*, in which Rogers commemorates his last meeting with the "Youth who swam from Sestos to Abydos"—

> "If imagined wrongs
> Pursued thee, urging thee sometimes to do
> Things long regretted, oft, as many know,
> None more than I, thy gratitude would build
> On slight foundations; and, if in thy life
> Not happy, in thy death thou surely wert,
> Thy wish accomplished."
>
> *Poems* by Samuel Rogers, 1852, ii. 119.]

Skin all sallow, flesh all sodden,
Form the Devil would frighten G—d in.
Is't a Corpse stuck up for show,[1]
Galvanized at times to go?
With the Scripture has't connection,[i]
New proof of the Resurrection?
Vampire, Ghost, or Goul (*sic*), what is it?
I would walk ten miles to miss it.

ANSWER.

Many passengers arrest one,
To demand the same free question.
Shorter's my reply and franker,—
That's the Bard, and Beau, and Banker:
Yet, if you could bring about
Just to turn him inside out,
Satan's self would seem less sooty,
And his present aspect—Beauty.
Mark that (as he masks the bilious)
Air so softly supercilious,
Chastened bow, and mock humility,
Almost sickened to Servility:
Hear his tone (which is to talking
That which creeping is to walking—
Now on all fours, now on tiptoe):
Hear the tales he lends his lip to—
Little hints of heavy scandals—
Every friend by turns he handles:
All that women or that men do
Glides forth in an inuendo (*sic*)—
Clothed in odds and ends of humour,
Herald of each paltry rumour—

i. *With the Scripture in connexion.*—[*Fraser's, etc.*]

1. ["'De mortuis nihil nisi bonum!' There is Sam Rogers [No. IV. of the Maclise Caricatures] a mortal likeness—painted to the very death!" A string of jests upon Rogers's corpse-like appearance accompanied the portrait (*Fraser's Magazine*, vol. ii. p. 237).]

From divorces down to dresses,
Woman's frailties, Man's excesses:
All that life presents of evil
Make for him a constant revel.
You're his foe—for that he fears you,
And in absence blasts and sears you:
You're his friend—for that he hates you,
First obliges, and then baits you,
Darting on the opportunity
When to do it with impunity:
You are neither—then he'll flatter,
Till he finds some trait for satire;
Hunts your weak point out, then shows it,
Where it injures, to expose it
In the mode that's most insidious,
Adding every trait that's hideous—
From the bile, whose blackening river
Rushes through his Stygian liver.

Then he thinks himself a lover—[1]
Why? I really can't discover,
In his mind, age, face, or figure;
Viper broth might give him vigour:
Let him keep the cauldron steady,
He the venom has already.

For his faults—he has but *one;*
'Tis but Envy, when all's done:
He but pays the pain he suffers,
Clipping, like a pair of Snuffers,
Light that ought to burn the brighter
For this temporary blighter.
He's the Cancer of his Species,
And will eat himself to pieces,—

1. [Among other "bogus" notes affixed to the poem as printed in *Fraser's Magazine* (parodies of the notes in Murray's new edition of Byron's *Works* in seventeen volumes), is one signed Sir E. Brydges, which enumerates a string of heiresses, beauties, and blues, whom Rogers had wooed in vain. Among the number are Mrs. Apreece (Lady Davy), Mrs. Coutts, "beat by the Duke of St. Albans," and the Princess Olive of Cumberland. "We have heard," the note concludes, "that he proposed for the Duchess of Cleveland, and was cut out by Beau Fielding, but we think that must have been before his time a little."]

Plague personified and Famine,—
Devil, whose delight is damning.[1]
For his merits—don't you know 'em?[1]
Once he wrote a pretty Poem.

1818.

[First published, *Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1833, vol. vii. pp. 82–84.]

THE DUEL.[2]

I.

'Tis fifty years, and yet their fray
To us might seem but yesterday.

—— *would you know 'em?*—[*Fraser's, etc.*]

1. ["If '*the* person' had not by many little dirty sneaking traits provoked it, I should have been silent, though I *had observed* him. Here follows an alteration. Put—

"Devil with such delight in damning
That if at the resurrection
Unto him the free selection
Of his future could be given
'Twould be rather Hell than Heaven.

You have a discretionary power about showing."—Letter to Murray, November 9, 1820, *Letters*, 1901, v. 113.]

2. [Addressed to Miss Chaworth, in allusion to a duel fought between two of their ancestors, D[ominus] B[yron] and Mr. C., January 26, 1765.

Byron and Mary Anne Chaworth were fourth cousins, both being fifth in descent from George, Viscount Chaworth, whose daughter Elizabeth was married to William, third Lord Byron (d. 1695), the poet's great-great-grandfather. The duel between their grand-uncles, William, fifth Lord Byron, and William Chaworth, Esq., of Annesley, was fought between eight and nine o'clock in the evening of Saturday, January 26, 1765 (see *The Gazetteer*, Monday, January 28, 1765), at the Star and Garter Tavern, Pall Mall. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of wilful murder (see for the "Inquisition," and report of trial, *Journals of the House of Lords*, 1765, pp. 49, 126–135), and on the presentation of their testimony to the House of Lords, Byron pleaded for a trial "by God and his peers," whereupon he was arrested and sent to the Tower. The case was tried by the Lords Temporal (the Lords Spiritual asked permission to withdraw), and, after a defence had been read by the prisoner, 119 peers brought in a verdict of "Not guilty of murder, guilty of manslaughter, on my honour." Four peers only returned a verdict of "Not guilty." The result of this verdict was that Lord Byron claimed the benefit of the statute of Edward VI., and was discharged on paying the fees.

The defence, which is given in full (see *Journal, etc.*, for April 17, 1765), is able and convincing. Whilst maintaining an air of chivalry and candour, the accused contrived to throw the onus of criminality on his antagonist. It was Mr. Chaworth who began the quarrel, by

'Tis fifty years, and three to boot,
Since, hand to hand, and foot to foot,
And heart to heart, and sword to sword,
One of our Ancestors was gored.
I've seen the sword that slew him;[1] he,
The slain, stood in a like degree
To thee, as he, the Slayer, stood
(Oh had it been but other blood!)
In kin and Chieftainship to me.
Thus came the Heritage to thee.

2.

To me the Lands of him who slew
Came through a line of yore renowned;
For I can boast a race as true
To Monarchs crowned, and some discrowned,
As ever Britain's Annals knew:
For the first Conqueror gave us Ground,[2]
And the last Conquered owned the line
Which was my mother's, and is mine.

3.

I loved thee—I will not say *how*,
Since things like these are best forgot:

sneering at his cousin's absurd and disastrous leniency towards poachers. It was Chaworth who insisted on an interview, not on the stairs, but in a private room, who locked the door, and whose demeanour made a challenge "to draw" inevitable. The room was dimly lit, and when the table was pushed back, the space for the combatants was but twelve feet by five. After two thrusts had been parried, and Lord Byron's shirt had been torn, he shifted a little to the right, to take advantage of such light as there was, came to close quarters with his adversary and, "as he supposed, gave the unlucky wound which he would ever reflect upon with the utmost regret."

If there was any truth in his plea, the "wicked Lord Byron" has been misjudged, and, at least in the matter of the duel, was not so black as he has been painted. For Byron's defence of his grand-uncle, see letter to M. J. J. Coulmann, Genoa, July 12, 1823, *Life*, by Karl Elze, 1872, pp. 443-446.]

1. [In the coroner's "Inquisition," the sword is described as being "made of iron and steel, of the value of five shillings." Byron says that "so far from feeling any remorse for having killed Mr. Chaworth, who was a fire-eater (*spadassin*), . . . he always kept the sword . . . in his bed-chamber, where it still was when he died."—*Ibid.*, p. 445.]

2. [Ralph de Burun held Horestan Castle and other manors from the Conqueror. Byron's mother was descended from James I. of Scotland.]

Perhaps thou may'st imagine now
  Who loved thee, and who loved thee not.
And thou wert wedded to another,[1]
  And I at last another wedded:
I am a father, thou a mother,
  To Strangers vowed, with strangers bedded.
For land to land, even blood to blood—
  Since leagued of yore our fathers were—
Our manors and our birthright stood;
And not unequal had I wooed,
  If to have wooed thee I could dare.
But this I never dared—even yet
When naught is left but to forget.
  I feel that I could only love:
To sue was never meant for me,
And least of all to sue to thee;
For many a bar, and many a feud,
Though never told, well understood
  Rolled like a river wide between—
And then there was the Curse of blood,
  Which even my Heart's can not remove.
  Alas! how many things have been!
Since we were friends; for I alone
Feel more for thee than can be shown.

4.

How many things! I loved thee—thou
  Loved'st me not: another was
The Idol of thy virgin vow,
  And I was, what I am, Alas!
And what he is, and what thou art,
  And what we were, is like the rest:
  We must endure it as a test,
And old Ordeal of the Heart.[2]

Venice, *Dec.* 29, 1818.

1. [See *The Dream*, line 127, *et passim*, *vide ante*, p. 31, *et sq.*]
2. [From an autograph MS. in the possession of Mr. Murray, now for the first time printed.]

STANZAS TO THE PO.[1]

1.

River, that rollest by the ancient walls,
Where dwells the Lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me:

2.

What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed!

3.

What do I say—a mirror of my heart?
Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong?
Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
And such as thou art were my passions long.

1. [There has been some misunderstanding with regard to this poem. According to the statement of the Countess Guiccioli (see *Works of Lord Byron*, ed. 1832, xii. 14), "Stanzas to the Po" were composed about the middle of April, 1819, "while Lord Byron was actually sailing on the Po," *en route* from Venice to Ravenna. Medwin, who was the first to publish the lines (*Conversations, etc.*, 1824, 4to, pp. 24–26), says that they were written when Byron was about to "quit Venice to join" the Countess at Ravenna, and, in a footnote, explains that the river referred to is the Po. Now, if the Countess and Medwin (and Moore, who follows Medwin, *Life*, p. 396) are right, and the river is the Po, the "ancient walls" Ravenna, and the "Lady of the land" the Guiccioli, the stanzas may have been written in June (not April), 1819, possibly at Ferrara, and the river must be the Po di Primaro. Even so, the first line of the first stanza and the third and fourth lines of the ninth stanza require explanation. The Po does not "roll by the ancient walls" of Ravenna; and how could Byron be at one and the same time "by the source" (stanza 9, line 4), and sailing on the river, or on some canalized tributary or effluent? Be the explanation what it may —and it is possible that the lines were *not* originally designed for the Countess, but for another "Lady of the land" (see letter to Murray, May 18, 1819)—it may be surmised that "the lines written last year on crossing the Po," the "mere verses of society," which were given to Kinnaird (see letter to Murray, May 8, 1820, and *Conversations of Lord Byron with Lady Blessington*, 1834, p. 143), were not the sombre though passionate elegy, "River, that rollest," but the bitter and somewhat cynical rhymes, "Could Love for ever, Run like a river" (*vide post*, p. 549).]

4.

Time may have somewhat tamed them,—not for ever;
Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye
Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away:

5.

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,[i.]
Borne in our old unchanged career, we move:
Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,
And I—to loving *one* I should not love.

6.

The current I behold will sweep beneath
Her native walls, and murmur at her feet;
Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
The twilight air, unharmed by summer's heat.

7.

She will look on thee,—I have looked on thee,
Full of that thought: and, from that moment, ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her!

8.

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream,—
Yes! they will meet the wave I gaze on now:
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow!

9.

The wave that bears my tears returns no more:
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep?—
Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,
I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.[ii.]

i. *But left long wrecks behind them, and again.*
Borne on our old unchanged career, we move;
Thou tendest wildly onward to the main.—[*Medwin.*]

ii. *I near thy source* ——.—[*Medwin.*]

10.

But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

11.

A stranger loves the Lady of the land,[i.]
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fanned
By the black wind that chills the polar flood.[ii.]

12.

My blood is all meridian; were it not,
I had not left my clime, nor should I be,[iii.]
In spite of tortures, ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love,—at least of thee.

13.

'Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved;
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.

June, 1819.

[First published, *Conversations of Lord Byron*, 1824, 4°, pp. 24-26.]

SONNET ON THE NUPTIALS OF THE MARQUIS ANTONIO CAVALLI WITH THE COUNTESS CLELIA RASPONI OF RAVENNA.[1]

A NOBLE Lady of the Italian shore
Lovely and young, herself a happy bride,
Commands a verse, and will not be denied,

i. *A stranger loves a lady* ——.—[*Medwin.*]
ii. *By the bleak wind* ——.—[*Medwin.*]
iii. *I had not left my clime;—I shall not be.*—[*Medwin.*]

1. I wrote this sonnet (after tearing the first) on being repeatedly urged to do so by the Countess G. [It was at the house of the Marquis Cavalli, uncle to the countess, that Byron appeared in the part of a fully-recognized "Cicisbeo."—See letter to Hoppner, December 31, 1819, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 393.]

From me a wandering Englishman; I tore
One sonnet, but invoke the muse once more
To hail these gentle hearts which Love has tied,
In Youth, Birth, Beauty, genially allied
And blest with Virtue's soul, and Fortune's store.
A sweeter language, and a luckier bard
Were worthier of your hopes, Auspicious Pair!
And of the sanctity of Hymen's shrine,
But,—since I cannot but obey the Fair,
To render your new state your true reward,
May your Fate be like *Hers*, and unlike *mine*.

Ravenna, *July* 31, 1819.

[From an autograph MS. in the possession of the Lady Dorchester, now for the first time printed.]

SONNET TO THE PRINCE REGENT.[i.]

ON THE REPEAL OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD'S FORFEITURE.

To be the father of the fatherless,
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy Sire's sway by a kingdom less,—[ii.]
This is to be a monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.
Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?[iii.]
Were it not easy, Sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by Mercy's means? for thus
Thy Sovereignty would grow but more complete,
A despot thou, and yet thy people free,[iv.]
And by the heart—not hand—enslaving us.

Bologna, *August* 12, 1819.[1]

[First published, *Letters and Journals*, ii. 234, 235.]

i. *To the Prince Regent on the repeal of the bill of attainder against Lord E. Fitzgerald, June*, 1819.

ii. *To leave* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

iii. *Who* NOW *would lift a hand* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

iv. —— *becomes but more complete*
Thyself a despot ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["So the prince has been repealing Lord Fitzgerald's forfeiture?

STANZAS.[1]

I.

COULD Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavour
Be tried in vain—
No other pleasure
With this could measure;
And like a treasure [i.]
We'd hug the chain.
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, formed for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season;
But let that season be only Spring.

i. *And as a treasure.*—[*MS. Guiccioli.*]

Ecco un' Sonetto! There, you dogs! there's a Sonnet for you: you won't have such as that in a hurry from Mr. Fitzgerald. You may publish it with my name, an ye wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good; it was a very noble piece of principality."—Letter to Murray, August 12, 1819.

For [William Thomas] Fitgerald, see *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 297, *note* 3; for Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-1798), see *Letters*, 1900, iv. 345, *note* 1. The royal assent was given to a bill for "restoring Edward Fox Fitzgerald and his sisters Pamela and Lucy to their blood," July 13, 1819. The sonnet was addressed to George IV. when Prince Regent. The title, "To George the Fourth," affixed in 1831, is incorrect.]

1. ["A friend of Lord Byron's, who was with him at Ravenna when he wrote these stanzas, says, They were composed, like many others, with no view of publication, but merely to relieve himself in a moment of suffering. He had been painfully excited by some circumstances which appeared to make it necessary that he should immediately quit Italy; and in the day and the hour that he wrote the song was labouring under an access of fever" (*Works*, 1832, xii. 317, *note* 1). Here, too, there is some confusion of dates and places. Byron was at Venice, not at Ravenna, December 1, 1819, when these lines were composed. They were sent, as Lady Blessington testifies, to Kinnaird, and are probably identical with the "mere verses of society," mentioned in the letter to Murray of May 8, 1820. The last stanza reflects the mood of a letter to the Countess Guiccioli, dated November 25 (1819), "I go to save you, and leave a country insupportable to me without you" (*Letters*, 1900, iv. 379, *note* 2).]

2.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
  Expect to die;
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
  For whom they sigh!
When linked together,
In every weather,[i.]
They pluck Love's feather
  From out his wing—
He'll stay for ever,[ii.]
  But sadly shiver
Without his plumage, when past the Spring.[iii.]

3.

Like Chiefs of Faction,
His life is action—
A formal paction
  That curbs his reign,
Obscures his glory,
Despot no more, he
Such territory
  Quits with disdain.
Still, still advancing,
With banners glancing,
His power enhancing,
  He must move on—
Repose but cloys him,
Retreat destroys him,
Love brooks not a degraded throne.

i. *Through every weather*
  We pluck.—[*MS. G.*]
ii. *He'll sadly shiver*
  And droop for ever,
Shorn of the plumage which sped his spring.—[*MS. G.*]
iii. —— *that sped his Spring.*—[*MS. G.*]

4.

Wait not, fond lover!
Till years are over,
And then recover
As from a dream.
While each bewailing
The other's failing,
With wrath and railing,
All hideous seem—
While first decreasing,
Yet not quite ceasing,
Wait not till teasing,
All passion blight:
If once diminished
Love's reign is finished—
Then part in friendship,—and bid good-night.[i]

5.

So shall Affection
To recollection
The dear connection
Bring back with joy:
You had not waited[ii]
Till, tired or hated,
Your passions sated
Began to cloy.
Your last embraces
Leave no cold traces—
The same fond faces
As through the past:
And eyes, the mirrors
Of your sweet errors,
Reflect but rapture—not least though last.

i. *His reign is finished*
One last embrace, then, and bid good-night.—[*MS. G.*]
ii. *You have not waited*
Till tired and hated
All passions sated.—[*MS. G.*]

6.

True, separations [1]
Ask more than patience;
What desperations
From such have risen!
But yet remaining,
What is't but chaining
Hearts which, once waning,
Beat 'gainst their prison?
Time can but cloy love,
And use destroy love:
The wingéd boy, Love,
Is but for boys—
You'll find it torture
Though sharper, shorter,
To wean, and not wear out your joys.

December 1, 1819.

[First published, *New Monthly Magazine*, 1832, vol. xxxv. pp. 310–312.]

ODE TO A LADY WHOSE LOVER WAS KILLED BY A BALL, WHICH AT THE SAME TIME SHIVERED A PORTRAIT NEXT HIS HEART.

MOTTO.

On peut trouver des femmes qui n'ont jamais eu de galanterie, mais il est rare d'en trouver qui n'en aient jamais eu qu'une.—[*Réflexions . . .* du Duc de la Rochefoucauld, No. lxxiii.]

1.

LADY! in whose heroic port
And Beauty, Victor even of Time,
And haughty lineaments, appear
Much that is awful, more that's dear—
Wherever human hearts resort
There must have been for thee a Court,
And Thou by acclamation Queen,
Where never Sovereign yet had been.

1. *True separations.*—[*MS. G.*]

That eye so soft, and yet severe,
  Perchance might look on Love as Crime;
And yet—regarding thee more near—
The traces of an unshed tear
  Compressed back to the heart,
And mellowed Sadness in thine air,
Which shows that Love hath once been there,
To those who watch thee will disclose
More than ten thousand tomes of woes
  Wrung from the vain Romancer's art.
With thee how proudly Love hath dwelt!
His full Divinity was felt,
Maddening the heart he could not melt,
  Till Guilt became Sublime;
But never yet did Beauty's Zone
For him surround a lovelier throne,
Than in that bosom once his own:
  And he the Sun and Thou the Clime
Together must have made a Heaven
For which the Future would be given.

2.

And thou hast loved—Oh! not in vain!
  And not as common Mortals love.
    The Fruit of Fire is Ashes,
    The Ocean's tempest dashes
Wrecks and the dead upon the rocky shore:
True Passion must the all-searching changes prove,
  The Agony of Pleasure and of Pain,
  Till Nothing but the Bitterness remain;
  And the Heart's Spectre flitting through the brain
Scoffs at the Exorcism which would remove.

3.

And where is He thou lovedst? in the tomb,
  Where should the happy Lover be!
For him could Time unfold a brighter doom,
  Or offer aught like thee?
He in the thickest battle died,
    Where Death is Pride;

And *Thou* his widow—not his bride,
Wer't not more free—
Here where all love, till Love is made
A bondage or a trade,
Here—thou so redolent of Beauty,
In whom Caprice had seemed a duty,
Thou, who could'st trample and despise
The holiest chain of human ties
For him, the dear One in thine eyes,
Broke it no more.
Thy heart was withered to it's Core,
It's hopes, it's fears, it's feelings o'er:
Thy Blood grew Ice when *his* was shed,
And Thou the Vestal of the Dead.

4.

Thy Lover died, as All
Who truly love should die;
For such are worthy in the fight to fall
Triumphantly.
No Cuirass o'er that glowing heart
The deadly bullet turned apart:
Love had bestowed a richer Mail,
Like Thetis on her Son;
But hers at last was vain, and thine could fail—
The hero's and the lover's race was run.
Thy worshipped portrait, thy sweet face,
Without that bosom kept it's place
As Thou *within*.
Oh! enviously destined Ball!
Shivering thine imaged charms and all
Those Charms would win:
Together pierced, the fatal Stroke hath gored
Votary and Shrine, the adoring and the adored.
That Heart's last throb was thine, that blood
Baptized thine Image in it's flood,
And gushing from the fount of Faith
O'erflowed with Passion even in Death,

Constant to thee as in it's hour
Of rapture in the secret bower.
Thou too hast kept thy plight full well,
As many a baffled Heart can tell.

[From an autograph MS. in the possession of Mr. Murray, now for the first time printed.]

THE IRISH AVATAR.[1.1]

"And Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant, kneeling to receive the paltry rider."—[*Life of Curran*, ii. 336.]

I.

ERE the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,[2]
And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,

1. *The enclosed lines, as you will directly perceive, are written by the Rev. W. L. Bowles. Of course it is for* him *to deny them, if they are not.*—[*Letter to Moore, September* 17, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 364.]

1. [A few days before Byron enclosed these lines in a letter to Moore (September 17, 1821) he had written to Murray (September 12): "If ever I *do* return to England . . . I will write a poem to which *English Bards, etc.*, shall be New Milk, in comparison. Your present literary world of mountebanks stands in need of such an Avatar." Hence the somewhat ambiguous title. The word "Avatar" is not only applied ironically to George IV. as the "Messiah of Royalty," but metaphorically to the poem, which would descend in the "Capacity of Preserver" (see Sir W. Jones, *Asiatic Research*, i. 234).

The "fury" which sent Byron into this "lawless conscription of rhythmus," was inspired partly by an ungenerous attack on Moore, which appeared in the pages of *John Bull* ("Thomas Moore is not likely to fall in the way of knighthood . . . being public defaulter in his office to a large amount. . . . [August 5]. It is true that we cannot from principle esteem the writer of the *Twopenny Postbag*. . . . It is equally true that we shrink from the profligacy," etc., August 12, 1821); and, partly, by the servility of the Irish, who had welcomed George IV. with an outburst of enthusiastic loyalty, when he entered Dublin in triumph within ten days of the death of Queen Caroline. The *Morning Chronicle*, August 8—August 18, 1821, prints effusive leading articles, edged with black borders, on the Queen's illness, death, funeral procession, etc., over against a column (in small type) headed "The King in Dublin." Byron's satire is a running comment on the pages of the *Morning Chronicle*. Moore was in Paris at the time, being, as *John Bull* said, "obliged to live out of England," and Byron gave him directions that twenty copies of the *Irish Avatar* "should be carefully and privately printed off" (see *Bibliography*, vol. vii. p. 260). In the first and second editions of his *Conversations*, Medwin, doubtless for prudential reasons, omitted twelve of the more libellous stanzas,

Lo! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long-cherished Isle which he loved like his—
bride.

2.

True, the great of her bright and brief Era are gone,
The rain-bow-like Epoch where Freedom could pause
For the few little years, out of centuries won,
Which betrayed not, or crushed not, or wept not her
cause.

3.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
The Castle still stands, and the Senate's no more,
And the Famine which dwelt on her freedomless crags
Is extending its steps to her desolate shore.

4.

To her desolate shore—where the emigrant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

5.

But he comes! the Messiah of Royalty comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan rolled from the waves:
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,[1]
With a legion of cooks,[3] and an army of slaves!

1. —— *such a hero becomes.*—[*MS. M.*]

but afterwards, in "another edition," published in 1824, reinstated them. Murray did not publish the *Irish Avatar* in any collected edition till 1831. According to Crabb Robinson (*Diary*, 1869, ii. 437), Goethe said that "Byron's verses on George IV. (*Query? The Irish Avatar*) were the sublime of hatred."]

2. [The Queen died on the night (10.20 p.m.) of Tuesday, August 7. The King entered Dublin in state Friday, August 17. The vessel bearing the Queen's remains sailed from Harwich on the morning of Saturday, August 18, 1821.]

3. ["Seven covered waggons arrived at the Castle (August 3). They were laden with plate. . . . Upwards of forty men cooks will be employed."—*Morning Chronicle*, August 8.]

6.

He comes in the promise and bloom of threescore,
To perform in the pageant the Sovereign's part—[1]
But long live the Shamrock, which shadows him o'er!
Could the Green in his *hat* be transferred to his *heart!*

7.

Could that long-withered spot but be verdant again,
And a new spring of noble affections arise—
Then might Freedom forgive thee this dance in thy chain,
And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the skies.

8.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—
Such servile devotion might shame him away.

9.

Aye, roar in his train![1] let thine orators lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride—
Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied.

10.

Ever glorious Grattan! the best of the good!
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!
With all which Demosthenes wanted endued,
And his rival, or victor, in all he possessed.

11.

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequalled, preceded, the task was begun—

1. *To enact in the pageant* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["Never did I witness such enthusiasm. . . . Cheer followed cheer—and shout followed shout . . . accompanied by exclamation of 'God bless King George IV.!' 'Welome, welcome, ten thousand times to these shores!'"—*Morning Chronicle*, August 16.]

But Grattan sprung up like a god from the tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the *one!* [1]

12.

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute;
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind;
Even Tyranny, listening, sate melted or mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorched from the glance of his mind.

13.

But back to our theme! Back to despots and slaves! [i]
Feasts furnished by Famine! rejoicings by Pain!
True Freedom but *welcomes*, while Slavery still *raves*,
When a week's Saturnalia hath loosened her chain.

14.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford,
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide)
Gild over the palace, Lo! Erin, thy Lord!
Kiss his foot with thy blessing—his blessings denied! [ii]

15.

Or *if* freedom past hope be extorted at last, [iii]
If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be classed
With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield their prey?

16.

Each brute hath its nature; a King's is to *reign*,—
To *reign!* in that word see, ye ages, comprised
The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From Cæsar the dreaded to George the despised!

i. *Aye! back to our theme* ——.—[*Medwin.*]
ii. *Kiss his foot, with thy blessing, for blessings denied!*—[*Medwin.*]
iii. *Or if freedom* ——.—[*Medwin.*]

1. ["After the stanza on Grattan, . . . will it please you to cause insert the following Addenda, which I dreamed of during to-day's Siesta."—Letter to Moore, September 20, 1821.]

17.

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping![1] O'Connell, proclaim[i]
His accomplishments! *His / / /* and thy country convince
Half an age's contempt was an error of fame,
And that "Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest *young* prince!"[ii]

18.

Will thy yard of blue riband, poor Fingal, recall
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs?
Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with hymns?

19.

Aye! "Build him a dwelling!" let each give his mite![2]
Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen![iii]
Let thy beggars and helots their pittance unite—
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison!

20.

Spread—spread for Vitellius, the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuffed to the gorge!
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The Fourth of the fools and oppressors called "George!"

21.

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan!
Till they *groan* like thy people, through ages of woe!

i. *Wear Fingal thy ribbon* ——.—[*MS. M.*]
ii. *And the King is no scoundrel—whatever the Prince.*—[*MS. M.*]
iii. *Till proudly the new* ——.—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["The Earl of Fingall (Arthur James Plunkett, K.P., eighth earl, d. 1836), the leading Catholic nobleman, is to be created a Knight of St. Patrick."—*Morning Chronicle*, August 18.]

2. [There was talk of a testimonial being presented to the King. O'Connell suggested that if possible it should take the form of "a palace, to which not only the rank around him could contribute, but to the erection of which every peasant could from his cottage contribute his humble mite."—*Morning Chronicle*, August 18.]

Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal's throne,
Like their blood which has flowed, and which yet has to flow.

22.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone—
On his right hand behold a Sejanus appears!
Thine own Castlereagh! let him still be thine own!
A wretch never named but with curses and jeers!

23.

Till now, when the Isle which should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile which crawled from her earth,
And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile.[1]

24.

Without one single ray of her genius,—without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—
The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt[i.]
If *she* ever gave birth to a being so base.

25.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hushed,
Which proclaims that from Erin no reptile can spring—
See the cold-blooded Serpent, with venom full flushed,
Still warming its folds in the breast of a King![ii.]

26.

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! Oh! Erin, how low
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still.

i. —— *might make Humanity doubt.*—[*MS. M.*]
ii. —— *in the heart of a king.*—[*Medwin. MS. M. erased.*]

1. ["The Marquis of Londonderry was cheered in the Castle-yard." "He was," says the correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, "the instrument of Ireland's degradation—he broke down her spirit, and prostrated, I fear, for ever her independence. To see the author of this measure cheered near the very spot," etc.]

27.

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right; [1]
My vote, as a freeman's, still voted thee free;
This hand, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight,[i.]
And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still for *thee!*

28.

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my land;[ii.]
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy sons,
And I wept with the world, o'er the patriot band
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

29.

For happy are they now reposing afar,—
Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan,[2] all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
And redeemed, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

30.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves!
Their shades cannot start to thy shouts of to-day—
Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves[iii.]
Be stamped in the turf o'er their fetterless clay.

31.

Till now I had envied thy sons and their shore,
Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties fled;[iv]

i. *My arm, though but feeble* ——.—[*Medwin.*]
ii. —— *though thou wert not my land.*—[*Medwin.*]
iii. *Nor the steps of enslavers, and slave-kissing slaves*
Be damp'd in the turf ——.—[*Medwin.*]
iv. *Though their virtues are blunted* ——.—[*Medwin.*]

1. [Byron spoke and voted in favour of the Earl of Donoughmore's motion for a Committee on the Roman Catholic claims, April 21, 1812. (See "Parliamentary Speeches," Appendix II., *Letters*, 1898, ii. 431–443.)]

2. [For Grattan and Curran, see letter to Moore, October 2, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 271, *note* 1; for Sheridan, see "Introduction to *Monody*," etc., *ante*, pp. 69, 70.]

There was something so warm and sublime in the core
Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy *dead*.[i.]

32.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon power,
'Tis the glory of Grattan, and genius of Moore![ii.] [1]

Ra. *September* 16, 1821.
[First published, Paris, September 19, 1821.]

STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA.[2]

1.

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story—
The days of our Youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.[3]

i. —— *that I envy their dead.*—[*Medwin.*]
ii. *They're the heart—the free spirit—the genius of Moore.*—[*MS. M.*]

1. ["Signed W. L. B——, M.A., and written with a view to a Bishoprick."—*Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 527, *note.*
Endorsed, "MS. Lord Byron. The King's visit to Ireland; a very seditious and horrible libel, which never was intended to be published, and which Lord B. called, himself, silly, being written in a moment of ill nature.—C. B."]

2. ["I composed these stanzas (except the fourth, added now) a few days ago, on the road from Florence to Pisa."—Pisa, 6th November, 1821, *Detached Thoughts*, No. 118, *Letters*, 1901, v. 466.]

3. ["I told Byron that his poetical sentiments of the attractions of matured beauty had, at the moment, suggested four lines to me; which he begged me to repeat, and he laughed not a little when I recited the following lines to him:—

"Oh! talk not to me of the charms of Youth's dimples,
There's surely more sentiment center'd in wrinkles.
They're the triumphs of Time that mark Beauty's decay,
Telling tales of years past, and the few left to stay."

Conversations of Lord Byron, 1834, pp. 255, 256.]

2.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew besprinkled:
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary,
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory?

3.

Oh FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy praises,
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear One discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

4.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her Glance was the best of the rays that surround thee,
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was Love, and I felt it was Glory.

November 6, 1821.

[First published, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, 1830, ii. 566, *note*.]

STANZAS TO A HINDOO AIR.[1]

1.

OH! my lonely—lonely—lonely—Pillow!
Where is my lover? where is my lover?
Is it his bark which my dreary dreams discover?
Far—far away! and alone along the billow?

2.

Oh! my lonely—lonely—lonely—Pillow!
Why must my head ache where his gentle brow lay?

1. [These verses were written by Lord Byron a little before he left Italy for Greece. They were meant to suit the Hindostanee air, "Alla Malla Punca," which the Countess Guiccioli was fond of singing.—Editor's note, *Works, etc.*, xiv. 357, Pisa, September, 1821.]

How the long night flags lovelessly and slowly,
And my head droops over thee like the willow!

3.

Oh! thou, my sad and solitary Pillow!
Send me kind dreams to keep my heart from breaking,
In return for the tears I shed upon thee waking;
Let me not die till he comes back o'er the billow.

4.

Then if thou wilt—no more my *lonely* Pillow,
In one embrace let these arms again enfold him,
And then expire of the joy—but to behold him!
Oh! my lone bosom!—oh! my lonely Pillow!

[First published, *Works of Lord Byron*, 1832, xiv. 357.]

TO ——[1]

1.

But once I dared to lift my eyes—
To lift my eyes to thee;
And since that day, beneath the skies,
No other sight they see.

2.

In vain sleep shuts them in the night—
The night grows day to me;
Presenting idly to my sight
What still a dream must be.

3.

A fatal dream—for many a bar
Divides thy fate from mine;
And still my passions wake and war,
But peace be still with thine.

[First published, *New Monthly Magazine*, 1833, vol. 37, p. 308.]

1. [Probably "To Lady Blessington," who includes them in her *Conversations of Lord Byron.*]

TO THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

1.

You have asked for a verse :—the request
In a rhymer 'twere strange to deny;
But my Hippocrene was but my breast,
And my feelings (its fountain) are dry.

2.

Were I now as I was, I had sung
What Lawrence has painted so well;[1]
But the strain would expire on my tongue,
And the theme is too soft for my shell.

3.

I am ashes where once I was fire,
And the bard in my bosom is dead;
What I loved I now merely admire,
And my heart is as grey as my head.

4.

My Life is not dated by years—
There are *moments* which act as a plough,
And there is not a furrow appears
But is deep in my soul as my brow.

5.

Let the young and the brilliant aspire
To sing what I gaze on in vain;
For Sorrow has torn from my lyre
The string which was worthy the strain.

B.

[First published, *Letters and Journals*, 1830, ii. 635, 636.]

1. [For reproduction of Lawrence's portrait of Lady Blessington, see "List of Illustrations," *Letters*, 1901, v. [xv.].]

ARISTOMENES.[1]

CANTO FIRST.

I.

THE Gods of old are silent on their shore.
Since the great Pan expired, and through the roar
Of the Ionian waters broke a dread
Voice which proclaimed "the Mighty Pan is dead."
How much died with him! false or true—the dream
Was beautiful which peopled every stream
With more than finny tenants, and adorned
The woods and waters with coy nymphs that scorned
Pursuing Deities, or in the embrace
Of gods brought forth the high heroic race
Whose names are on the hills and o'er the seas.

Cephalonia, *Septr* 10th 1823.

[From an autograph MS. in the possession of the Lady Dorchester, now for the first time printed.]

1. [Aristomenes, the Achilles of the Alexandrian poet Rhianus (Grote's *History of Greece*, 1869, ii. 428), is the legendary hero of the second Messenian War (B.C. 685–668). Thrice he slew a hundred of the Spartan foe, and thrice he offered the Hekatomphonia on Mount Ithome. His name was held in honour long after "the rowers on their benches" heard the wail, "Pan, Pan is dead!" At the close of the second century of the Christian era, Pausanias (iv. 16. 4) made a note of Messenian maidens hymning his victory over the Lacedæmonians—

"From the heart of the plain he drove them,
And he drove them back to the hill:
To the top of the hill he drove them,
As he followed them, followed them still!"

Byron was familiar with Thomas Taylor's translation of the *Periegesis Græciæ* (*vide ante*, p. 109, and "Observations," etc., *Letters*, v. Appendix III. p. 574), and with Mitford's *Greece* (*Don Juan*, Canto XII. stanza xix. line 7). Hence his knowledge of Aristomenes. The thought expressed in lines 5–11 was, possibly, suggested by Coleridge's translation of the famous passage in Schiller's *Piccolomini* (act ii. sc. 4, lines 118, *sq.*, "For fable is Love's world, his home," etc.), which is quoted by Sir Walter Scott, in the third chapter of *Guy Mannering*.]

THE BLUES:

A LITERARY ECLOGUE.

"Nimium ne crede colori."—VIRGIL, [*Ecl.* ii. 17].

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,
Though your *hair* were as *red*, as your *stockings* are *blue*.

INTRODUCTION TO *THE BLUES.*

BYRON'S correspondence does not explain the mood in which he wrote *The Blues*, or afford the slightest hint or clue to its *motif* or occasion. In a letter to Murray, dated Ravenna, August 7, 1821, he writes, "I send you a thing which I scribbled off yesterday, a mere buffoonery, to quiz 'The Blues.' If published it must be *anonymously*. . . . You may send me a proof if you think it worth the trouble." Six weeks later, September 20, he had changed his mind. "You need not," he says, "send *The Blues*, which is a mere buffoonery not meant for publication." With these intimations our knowledge ends, and there is nothing to show why in August, 1821, he took it into his head "to quiz The Blues," or why, being so minded, he thought it worth while to quiz them in so pointless and belated a fashion. We can but guess that an allusion in a letter from England, an incident at a conversazione at Ravenna, or perhaps the dialogues in Peacock's novels, *Melincourt* and *Nightmare Abbey*, brought to his recollection the half-modish, half-literary coteries of the earlier years of the Regency, and that he sketches the scenes and persons of his eclogue not from life, but from memory.

In the Diary of 1813, 1814, there is more than one mention of the "Blues." For instance, November 27, 1813, he writes, "Sotheby is a *Littérateur*, the oracle of the Coteries of the * * 's, Lydia White (Sydney Smith's 'Tory Virgin'), Mrs. Wilmot (she, at least, is a swan, and might frequent a purer stream), Lady Beaumont and all the Blues, with Lady Charlemont at their head." Again on December 1, "Tomorrow there is a party of *purple* at the 'blue' Miss Berry's. Shall I go? um!—I don't much affect your blue-bottles;—but one ought to be civil. . . . Perhaps that blue-winged Kashmirian butterfly of book-learning Lady Charlemont will be there" (see *Letters*, 1898, ii. 333, 358, *note* 2).

Byron was, perhaps, a more willing guest at literary

entertainments than he professed to be. "I met him," says Sir Walter Scott (*Memoirs of the Life, etc.*, 1838, ii. 167), "frequently in society. . . . Some very agreeable parties I can recollect, particularly one at Sir George Beaumont's, where the amiable landlord had assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry Davy. . . . Mr. Richard Sharpe and Mr. Rogers were also present."

Again, Miss Berry, in her *Journal* (1866, iii. 49) records, May 8, 1815, that "Lord and Lady Byron persuaded me to go with them to Miss [Lydia] White (*vide post*, p. 587). Never have I seen a more imposing convocation of ladies arranged in a circle than when we entered . . . Lord Byron brought me home. He stayed to supper." If he did not affect "your blue-bottles," he was on intimate terms with Madame de Staël, "the *Begum* of Literature," as Moore called her; with the Contessa d'Albrizzi (the De Staël of Italy); with Mrs. Wilmot, the inspirer of "She walks in beauty like the night;" with Mrs. Shelley; with Lady Blessington. Moreover, to say nothing of his "mathematical wife," who was as "blue as ether," the Countess Guiccioli could not only read and "inwardly digest" *Corinna* (see letter to Moore, January 2, 1820), but knew the *Divina Commedia* by heart, and was a critic as well as an inspirer of her lover's poetry.

If it is difficult to assign a reason or occasion for the composition of *The Blues*, it is a harder, perhaps an impossible, task to identify all the *dramatis personæ*. Botherby, Lady Bluemount, and Miss Diddle are, obviously, Sotheby, Lady Beaumont, and Lydia White. Scamp the Lecturer may be Hazlitt, who had incurred Byron's displeasure by commenting on his various and varying estimates of Napoleon (see *Lectures on the English Poets*, 1818, p. 304, and *Don Juan*, Canto I. stanza ii. line 7, *note* (to Buonaparte). Inkel seems to be meant for Byron himself, and Tracy, a friend, *not* a Lake poet, for Moore. Sir Richard and Lady Bluebottle may possibly symbolize Lord and Lady Holland; and Miss Lilac is, certainly, Miss Milbanke, the "Annabella" of Byron's courtship, not the "moral Clytemnestra" of his marriage and separation.

The Blues was published anonymously in the third number of the *Liberal*, which appeared April 26, 1823. The "Eclogue" was not attributed to Byron, and met with greater contempt than it deserved. In the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* (Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, May, 1823, vol. xiii. p. 607), the third number of the *Liberal* is dismissed with the remark, "The last Number contains not one *line*

of Byron's! Thank God! he has seen his error, and kicked them out." Brief but contemptuous notices appeared in the *Literary Chronicle*, April 26, and the *Literary Gazette*, May 3, 1823; while a short-lived periodical, named the *Literary Register* (May 3, quoted at length in *John Bull*, May 4, 1823), implies that the author (*i.e.* Leigh Hunt) would be better qualified to "catch the manners" of Lisson Grove than of May Fair. It is possible that this was the "last straw," and that the reception of *The Blues* hastened Byron's determination to part company with the profitless and ill-omened *Liberal*.

THE BLUES:[1]

A LITERARY ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE THE FIRST.

London.—Before the Door of a Lecture Room.

Enter TRACY, *meeting* INKEL.

Ink. YOU'RE too late.
Tra. Is it over?
Ink. Nor will be this hour.
But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower.
With the pride of our belles, who have made it the fashion;
So, instead of "beaux arts," we may say "la *belle* passion"
For learning, which lately has taken the lead in
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.
Tra. I know it too well, and have worn out my patience
With studying to study your new publications.

1. [Benjamin Stillingfleet is said to have attended evening parties at Mrs. Montague's in grey or blue worsted stockings, in lieu of full dress. The ladies who excused and tolerated this defiance of the conventions were nicknamed "blues," or "blue-stockings." Hannah More describes such a club or coterie in her *Bas Bleu*, which was circulated in MS. in 1784 (Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1848, p. 689). A farce by Moore, entitled *The M.P., or The Blue-Stocking*, was played for the first time at the Lyceum, September 30, 1811. The heroine, "Lady Bab Blue, is a pretender to poetry, chemistry, etc."—Genest's *Hist. of the Stage*, 1832, viii. 270.]

There's Vamp, Scamp, and Mouthy, and Wordswords and Co.[1]
With their damnable——
Ink. Hold, my good friend, do you know
Whom you speak to?
Tra. Right well, boy, and so does "the Row:"[2]
You're an author—a poet—
Ink. And think you that I
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry
The Muses?
Tra. Excuse me: I meant no offence
To the Nine; though the number who make some pretence
To their favours is such——but the subject to drop,
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop,
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,
As one finds every author in one of those places:)
Where I just had been skimming a charming critique,
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!
Where your friend—you know who—has just got such a threshing,
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refreshing*."[3]
What a beautiful word!
Ink. Very true; 'tis so soft
And so cooling—they use it a little too oft;
And the papers have got it at last—but no matter.
So they've cut up our friend then?
Tra. Not left him a tatter—
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,
Which they call a disgrace to the age, and the nation.

1. [Compare the dialogue between Mr. Paperstamp, Mr. Feathernest, Mr. Vamp, etc., in Peacock's *Melincourt*, cap. xxxii., *Works*, 1875, i. 272.]

2. [Compare—

> "The last edition see by Long. and Co.,
> Rees, Hurst, and Orme, our fathers of the Row."
> *The Search after Happiness*, by Sir Walter Scott.

3. [This phrase is said to have been first used in the *Edinburgh Review*—probably by Jeffrey. (See review of Rogers's *Human Life*, 1818, *Edin. Rev.*, vol. 31, p. 325.)]

Ink. I'm sorry to hear this! for friendship, you know——
Our poor friend!—but I thought it would terminate so.
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.
You don't happen to have the Review in your pocket?
Tra. No; I left a round dozen of authors and others
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.
Ink. Let us join them.
Tra. What, won't you return to the lecture?
Ink. Why the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd—[1]
Tra. How can you know that till you hear him?
Ink. I heard
Quite enough; and, to tell you the truth, my retreat
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.
Tra. I have had no great loss then?
Ink. Loss!—such a palaver!
I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,
That——come—do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.
Tra. *I* make you!
Ink. Yes, you! I said nothing until
You compelled me, by speaking the truth——
Tra. *To speak ill?*
Is that your deduction?
Ink. When speaking of Scamp ill,
I certainly *follow*, *not set* an example.
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.
Tra. And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.

1. [It is possible that the description of Hazlitt's Lectures of 1818 is coloured by recollections of Coleridge's Lectures of 1811–1812, which Byron attended (see letter to Harness, December 6, 1811, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 76, *note* 1); but the substance of the attack is probably derived from Gifford's review of *Lectures on the English Poets, delivered at the Surrey Institution* (*Quarterly Review*, December, 1818, vol. xix. pp. 424–434.]

But we two will be wise.
Ink. Pray, then, let us retire.
Tra. I would, but ——
Ink. There must be attraction much higher
Than Scamp, or the Jew's harp he nicknames his lyre,
To call *you* to this hotbed.
Tra. I own it—'tis true—
A fair lady——
Ink. A spinster?
Tra. Miss Lilac.
Ink. The Blue!
Tra. The heiress! The angel!
Ink. The devil! why, man,
Pray get out of this hobble as fast as you can.
You wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:
She's a poet, a chymist, a mathematician.[1]
Tra. I say she's an angel.
Ink. Say rather an *angle.*
If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.
I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.
Tra. And is that any cause for not coming together?
Ink. Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance
Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.
She's so learnéd in all things, and fond of concerning
Herself in all matters connected with learning,
That——
Tra. What?
Ink. I perhaps may as well hold my tongue;
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.
Tra. You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.
Ink. Is it miss or the cash of mamma you pursue?
Tra. Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you—something of both.
The girl's a fine girl.
Ink. And you feel nothing loth
To her good lady-mother's reversion; and yet

1. ["Yesterday, a very pretty letter from Annabella. . . . She is . . . very little spoiled, which is strange in an heiress. . . . She is a poetess —a mathematician—a metaphysician."—*Journal*, November 30, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 357.]

Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.
Tra. Let her live, and as long as she likes; I demand
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.
Ink. Why, that heart's in the inkstand—that hand on the pen.
Tra. A propos—Will you write me a song now and then?
Ink. To what purpose?
Tra. You know, my dear friend, that in prose
My talent is decent, as far as it goes;
But in rhyme——
Ink. You're a terrible stick, to be sure.
Tra. I own it; and yet, in these times, there's no lure
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two;
And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few?
Ink. In your name?
Tra. In my name. I will copy them out,
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.
Ink. Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?
Tra. Why,
Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stocking's eye,
So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?
Ink. As sublime! If it be so, no need of my Muse.
Tra. But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."
Ink. As sublime!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.
Stick to prose—As sublime!!—but I wish you good day.
Tra. Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider—I'm wrong;
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.
Ink. As sublime!!
Tra. I but used the expression in haste.
Ink. That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste.
Tra. I own it, I know it, acknowledge it—what
Can I say to you more?
Ink. I see what you'd be at:
You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.
Tra. And is that not a sign I respect them?
Ink. Why that

To be sure makes a difference.
Tra. I know what is what:
And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less
Than a poet of t'other, may easily guess
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend
A genius like you, and, moreover, my friend.
Ink. No doubt; you by this time should know what is due
To a man of——but come—let us shake hands.
Tra. You knew,
And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.
Ink. That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.
There were Renegade's epics, and Botherby's plays,[1]
And my own grand romance——
Tra. Had its full share of praise.
I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."[2]
Ink. What Review?
Tra. 'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux;"[3]
A clerical work of our Jesuits at home.

1. [The term "renegade" was applied to Southey by William Smith, M.P., in the House of Commons, March 14, 1817 (*vide ante*, p. 482). Sotheby's plays, *Ivan*, *The Death of Darnley*, *Zamorin and Zama*, were published under the title of *Five Tragedies*, in 1814.]

2. [Compare—

"I've bribed my Grandmother's Review the British."
Don Juan, Canto I. stanza ccix. line 9.

And see "Letter to the Editor of 'My Grandmother's Review,'" *Letters*, 1900, iv. Appendix VII. pp. 465–470. The reference may be to a review of the Fourth Canto of *Childe Harold*, which appeared in the *British Review*, January, 1818, or to a more recent and, naturally, most hostile notice of *Don Juan* (No. xviii. 1819).]

3. [*The Journal de Trévoux*, published under the title of *Mémoires de Trévoux* (1701–1775, 265 vols. 12°), edited by members of the Society of Jesus, was an imitation of the *Journal des Savants*. The original matter, the Mémoires, contain a mine of information for the student of the history of French Literature; but the reviews, critical notices, etc., to which Byron refers, were of a highly polemical and partisan character, and were the subject of attack on the part of Protestant and free-thinking antagonists. In a letter to Moore, dated Ravenna, June 22, 1821, Byron says, "Now, if we were but together a little to combine our *Journal of Trevoux!*" (*Letters*, 1901, v. 309). The use of the same illustration in letter and poem is curious and noteworthy.]

Have you never yet seen it?
Ink. That pleasure's to come.
Tra. Make haste then.
Ink. Why so?
Tra. I have heard people say
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* t'other day.[1]
Ink. Well, that is a sign of some *spirit.*
Tra. No doubt.
Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?
Ink. I've a card, and shall go: but at present, as soon
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the moon,
(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits),
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's collation,
To partake of a luncheon and learn'd conversation:
'Tis a sort of reunion for Scamp, on the days
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.
Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.
Tra. That "metal's attractive."
Ink. No doubt—to the pocket.
Tra. You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.
But let us proceed; for I think by the hum——
Ink. Very true; let us go, then, before they can come,
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levee,
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.
Hark! Zounds, they'll be on us; I know by the drone
Of old Botherby's spouting ex-cathedrâ tone.[2]
Aye! there he is at it. Poor Scamp! better join
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.
Tra. All fair; 'tis but lecture for lecture.
Ink. That's clear.
But for God's sake let's go, or the Bore will be here.
Come, come: nay, I'm off.

[*Exit* INKEL.

1. [The publication of the *British Review* was discontinued in 1825.]
2. [For "Botherby," *vide ante*, *Beppo*, stanza lxxii. line 7, p. 182, *note* 1; and with the "ex-cathedrâ tone" compare "that awful note of woe," *Vision of Judgment*, stanza xc. line 4, *ante*, p. 518.]

Tra. You are right, and I'll follow;
'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo.*" [1]
And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,[2]
Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,
All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles
With a glass of Madeira [3] at Lady Bluebottle's.
[*Exit* TRACY.

ECLOGUE THE SECOND.

An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—*A Table prepared.*

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE *solus.*

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?
Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.
My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;
My days, which once passed in so gentle a void,
Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed;
The twelve, do I say?—of the whole twenty-four,
Is there one which I dare call my own any more?
What with driving and visiting, dancing and dining,
What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and shining,

1. ["Sotheby is a good man, rhymes well (if not wisely), but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One night of a rout at Mrs. Hope's, he had fastened upon me (something about Agamemnon, or Orestes, or some of his plays), notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest distress (for I was in love, and just nicked a minute, when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor gossips, were near my then idol, who was beautiful as the Statues of the Gallery where we stood at the time)—Sotheby I say had seized upon me by the button and the heart-strings, and spared neither. William Spencer, who likes fun, and don't dislike mischief, saw my case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand, and pathetically bade me farewell; 'for,' said he, 'I see it is all over with you.' Sotheby then went away. '*Sic me servavit Apollo.*'"—*Detached Thoughts*, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 433.]

2. [For Byron's misapprehension concerning "kibes," see *Childe Harold*, Canto I. stanza lxvii. line 5, *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 64, *note* 3.]

3. ["Where can the animals who write this trash have been bred, to fancy that ladies drink bumpers of Madeira at luncheon?"—*Literary Register*, May 3, 1823.]

In science and art, I'll be cursed if I know
Myself from my wife; for although we are two,
Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done
In a style which proclaims us eternally one.
But the thing of all things which distresses me more
Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)
Is the numerous, humorous, backbiting crew
Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,
Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost—
For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host—
No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,
But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;
A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,
By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call "BLUES;"
A rabble who know not——But soft, here they come!
Would to God I were deaf! as I'm not, I'll be dumb.

Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE, MISS LILAC, LADY BLUEMOUNT, MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MAZARINE, *and others*, *with* SCAMP *the Lecturer*, *etc.*, *etc.*

Lady Blueb. Ah! Sir Richard, good morning: I've brought you some friends.

Sir Rich. (*bows, and afterwards aside*). If friends, they're the first.

Lady Blueb. But the luncheon attends.
I pray ye be seated, "*sans cérémonie.*"
Mr. Scamp, you're fatigued; take your chair there, next me. [*They all sit.*

Sir Rich. (*aside*). If he does, his fatigue is to come.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Tracy—
Lady Bluemount—Miss Lilac—be pleased, pray, to place ye;
And you, Mr. Botherby—

Both. Oh, my dear Lady,
I obey.

Lady Blueb. Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye:
You were not at the lecture.

Ink. Excuse me, I was;
But the heat forced me out in the best part—alas!
And when—
Lady Blueb. To be sure it was broiling; but then
You have lost such a lecture!
Both. The best of the ten.
Tra. How can you know that? there are two more.
Both. Because
I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.
The very walls shook.
Ink. Oh, if that be the test,
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you;—a wing?
Miss Lil. No more, sir, I thank you. Who lectures next spring?
Both. Dick Dunder.
Ink. That is, if he lives.
Miss Lil. And why not?
Ink. No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?
Lady Bluem. With pleasure.
Ink. How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere treasure?
Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,[1]
And their gatherers, as Homer sung warriors and kings?
Lady Bluem. He has just got a place.[2]
Ink. As a footman?
Lady Bluem. For shame!
Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.
Ink. Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;
For the poet of pedlers 'twere, sure, no disaster
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.
Lady Bluem. For shame! I repeat. If Sir George could but hear——

1. [Wordsworth's *Resolution and Independence*, originally entitled *The Leech-gatherer*, was written in 1802, and published in 1807.]
2. [Wordsworth was appointed Distributor of Stamps for the County of Westmoreland, in March, 1813. Lord Lonsdale and Sir George Beaumont were "suretys for the due execution of the trust."—*Life of William Wordsworth*, by William Knight, 1889, ii. 210.]

Lady Blueb. Never mind our friend Inkel; we all
know, my dear,
'Tis his way.
Sir Rich. But this place——
Ink. Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,
A lecturer's.
Lady Bluem. Excuse me—'tis one in the "Stamps:"
He is made a collector.
Tra. Collector!
Sir Rich. How?
Miss Lil. What?
Ink. I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat:[1]
There his works will appear——
Lady Bluem. Sir, they reach to the Ganges.
Ink. I sha'n't go so far—I can have them at Grange's.[2]
Lady Bluem. Oh fie!
Miss Lil. And for shame!
Lady Bluem. You're too bad.
Both. Very good!
Lady Bluem. How good?
Lady Blueb. He means nought—'tis his phrase.
Lady Bluem. He grows rude.
Lady Blueb. He means nothing; nay, ask him.
Lady Bluem. Pray, Sir! did you mean
What you say?
Ink. Never mind if he did; 'twill be seen
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.
Both. Sir!
Ink. Pray be content with your portion of praise;
'Twas in your defence.
Both. If you please, with submission
I can make out my own.
Ink. It would be your perdition.
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend
Yourself or your works; but leave both to a friend.
Apropos—Is your play then accepted at last?
Both. At last?

1. [Byron did not know, or did not choose to remember, that hat stamps had gone out with the hat tax, which was abolished in 1811. (See *Notes and Queries*, Series VI. vol. viii. pp. 391, etc.)]
2. Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.

Ink. Why I thought—that's to say—there had passed
A few green-room whispers, which hinted,—you know
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.[1]
Both. Sir, the green-room's in rapture, and so's the Committee.
Ink. Aye—yours are the plays for exciting our "pity
And fear," as the Greek says: for "purging the mind,"
I doubt if you'll leave us an equal behind.
Both. I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue's aid.
Ink. Well, time enough yet, when the play's to be played.
Is it cast yet?
Both. The actors are fighting for parts,
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.
Lady Blueb. We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.
Tra. And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.
Ink. Not quite.
However, to save my friend Botherby trouble,
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double.
Tra. Why so?
Ink. To do justice to what goes before.
Both. Sir, I'm happy to say, I've no fears on that score.
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are——
Ink. Never mind *mine*;
Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.
Lady Bluem. You're a fugitive writer, I think, sir, of rhymes?[2]
Ink. Yes, ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,

1. ["When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee . . . the number of plays upon the shelves were about *five* hundred. . . . Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered us ALL his tragedies, and I pledged myself; and, notwithstanding many squabbles with my Committe[e]d Brethren, did get 'Ivan' accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some *tepid*-ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play."—*Detached Thoughts*, 1821, *Letters*, 1901, v. 442.]

2. [*Fugitive Pieces* is the title of the suppressed quarto edition of Byron's juvenile poems.]

Or on Mouthey, his friend, without taking to flight.
Lady Bluem. Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity
Will right these great men, and this age's severity
Become its reproach.
Ink. I've no sort of objection,
So I'm not of the party to take the infection.
Lady Blueb. Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take?*
Ink. Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake
Have taken already, and still will continue
To take—what they can, from a groat to a guinea,
Of pension or place;—but the subject's a bore.
Lady Bluem. Well, sir, the time's coming.
Ink. Scamp! don't you feel sore?
What say you to this?
Scamp. They have merit, I own;
Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.
Ink. Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures?
Scamp. It is only time past which comes under my strictures.
Lady Blueb. Come, a truce with all tartness;—the joy of my heart
Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.
Wild Nature!—Grand Shakespeare!
Both. And down Aristotle!
Lady Bluem. Sir George[1] thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle:
And my Lord Seventy-four,[2] who protects our dear Bard,

1. [Sir George Beaumont, Bart., of Coleorton, Leicestershire (1753-1827), landscape-painter, art critic, and picture-collector, one of the founders of the National Gallery, married, in 1778, Margaret Willis, granddaughter of Chief Justice Willis. She corresponded with Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, and with Coleridge (see *Memorials of Coleorton*, 1888). Coleridge visited the Beaumonts for the first time at Dunmore, in 1804. "I was not received here," he tells Wordsworth, "with mere kindness; I was welcomed *almost* as you welcomed me when first I visited you at Racedown" (*Letters of S. T. Coleridge*, 1895, ii. 459). Scott (*Memoirs of the Life, etc.*, 1838, ii. 11) describes Sir George Beaumont as "by far the most sensible and pleasing man I ever knew, kind, too, in his nature, and generous and gentle in society. . . . He was the great friend of Wordsworth, and understood his poetry."]

2. [It was not Wordsworth's patron, William Lord Lonsdale, but

And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard
For the poet, who, singing of pedlers and asses,
Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.
Tra. And you, Scamp!—
Scamp. I needs must confess I'm embarrassed.
Ink. Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed
With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.[1]
Tra. Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.
I should like to know who.
Ink. And I should not be sorry
To know who are *not*:—it would save us some worry.
Lady Blueb. A truce with remark, and let nothing control
This "feast of our reason, and flow of the soul."
Oh! my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise!—I
Now feel such a rapture, I'm ready to fly,
I feel so elastic—"*so buoyant—so buoyant!*"[2]
Ink. Tracy! open the window.
Tra. I wish her much joy on't.
Both. For God's sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not
This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot
Upon earth. Give it way: 'tis an impulse which lifts
Our spirits from earth—the sublimest of gifts;
For which poor Prometheus was chained to his mountain:
'Tis the source of all sentiment—feeling's true fountain;
'Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: 'tis the gas
Of the soul: 'tis the seizing of shades as they pass,
And making them substance: 'tis something divine:—
Ink. Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?
Both. I thank you: not any more, sir, till I dine.
Ink. Apropos—Do you dine with Sir Humphry to day?[3]

his kinsman James, the first earl, who, towards the close of the American war, offered to build and man a ship of seventy-four guns.]

1. [For this harping on "schools" of poetry, see Hazlitt's Lectures "On the Living Poets," *Lectures on the English Poets* (No. viii.), 1818, p. 318.]

2. Fact from life, with the *words*.

3. [Sir Humphry Davy (1778–1829), President of the Royal Society, received the honour of knighthood April 8, 1812. He was created a baronet January 18, 1819.]

Tra. I should think with *Duke* Humphry[1] was more in your way.

Ink. It might be of yore; but we authors now look
To the Knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.
The truth is, each writer now quite at his ease is,
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

Tra. And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.
And you, Scamp—

Scamp. Excuse me! I must to my notes,
For my lecture next week.

Ink. He must mind whom he quotes
Out of "Elegant Extracts."

Lady Blueb. Well, now we break up;
But remember Miss Diddle[2] invites us to sup.

Ink. Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock, and champagne!

Tra. And the sweet lobster salad![3]

Both. I honour that meal;
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely—feel.

1. [Compare "We have been for many years at a great distance from each other; we are now separated. You have combined arsenic with your gold, Sir Humphry! You are brittle, and I will rather dine with Duke Humphry than with you."—*Anima Poetæ*, by S. T. Coleridge, 1895, p. 218.]

2. ["Lydia White," writes Lady Morgan (*Memoirs*, 1862, ii. 236), "was a personage of much social celebrity in her day. She was an Irish lady of large fortune and considerable talent, noted for her hospitality and dinners in all the capitals of Europe." She is mentioned by Moore (*Memoirs*, 1853, iii. 21), Miss Berry (*Journal*, 1866, ii. 484), Ticknor (*Life, Letters, and Journal*, 1876, i. 176), etc., etc.

Byron saw her for the last time in Venice, when she borrowed a copy of *Lalla Rookh* (Letter to Moore, June 1, 1818, *Letters*, 1900, iv. 237). Sir Walter Scott, who knew her well, records her death: "January 28, [1827]. Heard of Miss White's death—she *was* a woman of wit, and had a feeling and kind heart. Poor Lydia! I saw the Duke of York and her in London, when Death, it seems, was brandishing his dart over them.

'The view o't gave them little fright.'"

(*Memoirs of the Life, etc.*, 1838, iv. 110.)]

3. [Moore, following the example of Pope, who thought his "delicious lobster-nights" worth commemorating, gives details of a supper at Watier's, May 19, 1814, at which Kean was present, when Byron "confined himself to lobsters, and of these finished two or three, to his own share," etc.—an Ambrosian night, indeed!—*Life*, p. 254.]

Ink. True; feeling is truest *then*, far beyond question:
I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion! 161
Lady Blueb. Pshaw!—never mind that; for one moment of feeling
Is worth—God knows what.
Ink. 'Tis at least worth concealing
For itself, or what follows—But here comes your carriage.
Sir Rich. (*aside*). I wish all these people were d——d with *my* marriage! [*Exeunt.*

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LONDON AND BECCLES.

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